

INSPECTION REPORT

**WOODCHURCH CHURCH OF
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Upton

Wirral

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 105067

Headteacher: Mr R Vaughan

Reporting inspector: Mr P Edwards
21069

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th March 2003

Inspection number: 252298

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Lane
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Wirral

Postcode: CH49 7LS

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs K Watts

Date of previous inspection: 7th July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woodchurch Church of England School is a voluntary aided primary school situated in Woodchurch on the outskirts of Birkenhead. There are currently 214 pupils on roll, 112 boys and 102 girls. This includes 26 children who are in the Reception class. It is a popular school, frequently over-subscribed with a significant minority of pupils admitted from beyond the local area. Pupil mobility is low. Most pupils are of white ethnic origin and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (21.5 per cent) is above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (12 per cent) is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Assessment information shows that the attainment of children soon after they start school covers the full ability range but it is below average overall. The school has gained Achievement Awards in each of the last two years and has recently been awarded 'Artsmark Gold' status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with many strengths. By the time the pupils leave school at the age of eleven, they are attaining standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science and they achieve high standards in art and design and information and communication technology. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The pupils have very good attitudes towards work and their behaviour is excellent. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management and is extremely well supported by his staff and Governing Body. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science when the pupils leave school at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, the pupils attain above average standards in writing. The pupils attain high standards in art and design and information and communication technology.
- Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school.
- The pupils have very good attitudes towards work and their behaviour is excellent.
- The pupils are provided with a very good curriculum that is enriched through a wide variety of out of school activities.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management and is very well supported by senior staff and governors.

What could be improved

- The school has no significant weaknesses.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1998 and, since that time, has made very good progress. The quality of teaching, which was satisfactory overall at the time of the previous inspection, has improved significantly due to an improvement in the teachers' planning and procedures for assessing the pupils' progress. This improved teaching has made an impact on the standards achieved by the pupils in English, mathematics and science and they are now much better by the end of Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology have also improved. Co-ordinators now make a significant contribution to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and this has helped to raise the quality of teaching and learning. The physical environment has improved significantly with the addition of extra classroom and office accommodation and the leadership has been successful in securing additional grants to enable further improvements to be made. Under the leadership of the current headteacher, who has maintained the drive made by his predecessor, and with the support of governors and commitment of staff, this is a school that is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table shows that in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, the pupils' attainment was well above the national average in English and science and average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' attainment was well above average in all three subjects. Over the last four years standards have been improving and the trend in the rate of improvement for all three subjects is better than that seen nationally. The improvement in attainment has been recognised by the school gaining achievement awards from the government in 2001 and 2002. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

The results at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests show that the pupils' attainment is below the national average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. When compared with similar schools, attainment is above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. The better performance in writing is attributed to the significant emphasis placed on the development of writing skills since it was identified as an issue in the previous report.

The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are well above national expectations by the end of Year 6. The difference between the test results and the inspection findings in mathematics is due in part to the different cohorts but more

significantly to the absence and under-performance of a small number of pupils when the tests in mathematics were taken. As pupils move through the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their learning and the overwhelming majority achieve very well. Literacy and numeracy targets for 2003 are challenging, but the school is well on course to achieve them. By the time they leave the school, their attainment in art and design and information and communication technology is above average due to the quality of teaching in these areas of the curriculum.

The children's attainment when they join the Reception class is variable but is below the expected level overall. The children make very good progress due to the quality of teaching and the curriculum provision and by the time they enter Year 1, most are now exceeding the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy work and contribute effectively in lessons. They are very well motivated and are keen to do well and participate fully in the wide range of activities that are provided outside of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. The pupils behave impeccably. They are polite and courteous and respectful to teachers and classmates. Pupils work very well together and willingly share ideas and resources.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils get on very well with one another and with the staff. The pupils show very good levels of independence in their work and are keen to take on responsibilities.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance rate is above the national average, there is no unauthorised absence and lessons start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught and the pupils are provided with good opportunities to practise the skills they have learned in other subjects. Information and communication technology is taught systematically throughout the school and the teachers' confidence and knowledge enable the pupils to achieve very well and attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. The teaching of creative arts is very good, the pupils learn well and this has resulted in the award of an 'Artsmark Gold' for the school.

The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving and pupils respond with enthusiasm to the challenges. The teachers know the pupils very well and match the work closely to the pupils' ability. The teachers quickly identify where the pupils need further clarification or where a subject needs further work. As a result, all groups of pupils make very good progress. A particular strength of the teaching is the quality of relationships that exist between the staff and pupils. This enables pupils to learn in an environment where they are encouraged to have a go, to question and to challenge without fear of failure. The teachers are enthusiastic and this helps to create a very happy learning environment where the pupils share in the enjoyment.

The teachers use questioning very effectively and this helps to focus the pupils' attention on the key learning objectives of the lessons and for the pupils themselves to determine whether they have understood the key concepts. The teachers ensure that all groups of pupils participate in lessons and tailor their questioning accordingly to ensure that this happens. Discussions at the end of lessons are used very effectively to determine what the pupils have learned and perceptive questioning by the teachers enables them to assess effectively the level of the pupils' understanding.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities. The National Curriculum is fully implemented in the infant and juniors and is enhanced by a very wide range of out of school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The needs of these pupils are identified early and they are provided with appropriate support in lessons and when withdrawn from class for additional activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well developed. Musical, creative and physical experiences add much to this aspect of the pupils' development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has good procedures in place for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' safety. There are very good procedures in place for assessing the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science and they are good in other subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides clear, effective leadership and manages the school very well. He is provided with very good support by the staff, parents and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The Governing Body meets all its statutory duties. It is well-informed, supportive and knowledgeable and is very effective in monitoring what is taking place in school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and governors have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the good school development plan has been used effectively to ensure progress has been made in achieving its goals. The school is constantly evaluating its performance and through a wide range of strategies, identifies how it might improve.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Very effective use is made of all available funds. The school has been very effective in securing additional grants for improving the accommodation and learning resources. It makes very effective use of the expertise of staff and visitors to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils. The school constantly seeks to identify ways in which its resources can be used most effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • The teaching is good. • The school looks after the children well and expects them to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How closely the school works with parents. • The information provided about how their children are progressing. • The number and range of out of school activities.

The vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and the inspection team agrees with the parent's positive views of the school. The amount of information provided about how the pupils are progressing is similar to that seen in other primary schools and there are good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress. The school has already identified that it could provide the parents with more information about the work their children are covering. The number and range of out of school activities is very good and covers sporting, musical and other activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science when the pupils leave school at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, the pupils attain above average standards in writing. The pupils attain high standards in art and design and information and communication technology.

1. The 2002 national test results at the end of Year 6 show that the pupils' attainment is well above the national average in English and science and average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is well above average in all three subjects. Over the last four years standards have been improving and the trend in the rate of improvement for all three subjects is better than that seen nationally. The improvement in attainment has been recognised by the school gaining achievement awards from the government in 2001 and 2002. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
2. The results at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests show that the pupils' attainment is below the national average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Inspection findings confirm this picture. When compared with similar schools, attainment is above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. The better performance in writing is attributed to the significant emphasis placed on the development of writing skills since it was identified as an issue in the previous report.
3. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are well above national expectations by the end of Year 6. The difference between the test results and the inspection findings in mathematics is due in part to the different cohorts, but more significantly to the absence of a small number of pupils when the tests in mathematics were taken. As pupils move through the school they make very good progress in their learning and the overwhelming majority achieve very well.
4. The children get a very good start to school in the Reception class. The very good quality of teaching, together with the varied and interesting curriculum, ensure that their needs are fully met. When children start school there is a wide range of ability but it is below average overall. All groups of pupils make very good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 many exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning.
5. Reading is well taught throughout the school. By the end of Year 6 pupils read fluently and with confidence and accuracy. The most able pupils convey meaning through good expression, varying the tone and speed of their reading. Most pupils discuss the books they have read and highlight the favourite parts and characters, for instance, from the *Harry Potter* books by JK Rowling. There are good assessment procedures in place that identify how well the pupils' reading skills develop and the structured reading scheme is utilised effectively. The less able pupils are provided with good support to enable them to develop their reading skills. The implementation of a *Reading Recovery* programme ensures that the needs of these pupils are met at an early stage. As a result, the overwhelming majority of pupils become good readers during their time in school. The attractive school library has a satisfactory range of books and the school is in the process of building up its stock of reference material.
6. The pupils speak clearly and confidently. They articulate their ideas well using a good range of interesting vocabulary. The pupils respond to the teachers' questioning well,

using extended answers to give their views. The opportunity to take part in drama activities enables the pupils to develop their confidence. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, after listening to an extract from *The Enchanter's Daughter*, the pupils worked well together to devise and act out a dramatic scene and did so with a lack of self-consciousness.

7. The standard of pupils' writing is above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. The school has made a considerable effort to raise the quality of pupils' writing since the previous inspection and the concerted effort in all year groups has ensured they make considerable progress. By the end of Year 2, the pupils punctuate their work accurately and the more able pupils are making good attempts at using speech marks. They are developing a good vocabulary which they use well in their writing to make it more interesting. The pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop writing in other subjects. For example, they write a set of instructions on how to make a cake, produce a flow chart showing the optimum condition for plant growth and complete a booklet with information about Africa. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' handwriting is neat with a good fluent style, they write sentences showing a good knowledge of correct grammatical construction and they use accurately a wide range of punctuation. Pupils write for a very wide range of purposes and their ability to adapt styles for different audiences is very good. The teachers plan very effectively to ensure that pupils are able to practise their writing skills in many of the subject areas. For example, as part of their study of the Second World War, the older pupils wrote a good review of *Goodnight Mr Tom*, identifying the differences between the book and television version. The pupils understand the format that should be used to compose a formal letter as when they write to a council complaining of a proposed road-building project. They show a good knowledge of how to write a biography and autobiography. They enjoy writing poetry and use styles such as haiku, riddles, limericks and kennings.
8. By the end of Year 6, the pupils achieve standards in mathematics that are well above average. Absences on the day of the tests and some under-performance by more able pupils affected the 2002 National Curriculum test results which are not a true reflection of how the pupils achieve. In the Foundation Stage and in Year 1 to Year 2 the pupils are provided with a very good introduction to mathematics and its relevance to every day life. The basic skills of numeracy are taught well ensuring that pupils have the confidence to tackle problems with ease. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through a good range of practical activities as well as more formal methods. The teaching of mathematics is consistently good and is used effectively to determine the different ways in which pupils arrive at their answers. The pupils have a good ability to solve problems using their number knowledge. The teaching ensures that all elements of the curriculum are covered in depth and this helps pupils to gain a good understanding of shape, space, measures, estimating, and handling and interpreting data as well as fostering their high level of number skills. The older pupils manipulate large numbers with ease. They are taught strategies to help them with multiplication and division calculations that enable them to calculate at speed and with a good level of accuracy.
9. The teachers are skilled at identifying which pupils are not secure with particular concepts and make sure that appropriate help and guidance is provided to develop confidence. The pupils have a very good awareness of when to use mental calculation, pencil and paper method or when to use a calculator. By the time the pupils leave school they have a very good knowledge of number, they measure accurately, fully understand probability and interpret data effectively. The pupils record data very well using a range of different graphs. They name a wide range of two dimensional and three dimensional shapes using specific criteria and properties. Good examples were

observed of the pupils using their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science, which added much to the quality of their learning. Good examples were also observed of computers being used to enhance the pupils' learning in mathematics and younger pupils were observed using programmable vehicles to develop their understanding of turning through a number of degrees.

10. Standards in science are well above average by the end of Year 6. There is very good coverage of all aspects of the subject. Each aspect is covered in depth and this enables the pupils to develop a very good understanding of science. A good emphasis is placed on practical and investigative activities and the pupils achieve well in this area. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of forces, and use appropriate vocabulary in the correct context. They confidently explain the difference between solids, liquids and gases and have a good appreciation of what constitutes a fair test. Very good use is made of information and communication technology to develop the pupils' scientific knowledge, for example using sensors to measure sound and producing graphs from the data, and using microscopes linked to computers. There are good, established links with the secondary school and Year 6 pupils carry out investigative activities under the guidance of their staff and this has a positive impact on their progress.
11. Throughout the school there is good evidence of regular work being undertaken in art and design and this enables the pupils to attain good standards by the end of Year 6. A significant strength of the curriculum is the way in which each art topic is covered as a whole school project. Although the work of some famous artists is covered, the co-ordinators also choose lesser known artists and pupils from all year groups produce work at the same time using a variety of media. There are good examples of work using clay and other three-dimensional work such as sculptures using wire frames. The pupils' progress in art is developed through the use of *Artists in Residence*. When these artists work with the pupils the opportunity is taken to identify those with particular talents and they are provided with additional guidance to help them progress further.
12. All of the aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum are well covered and there is regular teaching of skills in all year groups and good opportunities for the pupils to use computers in the suite and also in classrooms. The very good leadership and enthusiasm of the staff ensure that the pupils achieve standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6. Word processing and publishing programs are used regularly and effectively to support work in literacy, history and geography and the Internet is used well to develop the pupils' research skills, for instance in their topic on Mexico. Standards in science and numeracy are improved because the pupils use programs to increase their understanding of data handling, spreadsheets, using sensors and the construction of graphs and charts. The pupils demonstrate a high degree of skill as they produce animated films, altering the number of frames per second and adding sound and music to the computer based project. The school makes very effective use of electronic mail and links with schools in Italy, Mexico, Sweden, Columbia and several in England, make a considerable impact on the pupils' cultural awareness.

Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school.

13. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school and this has a very positive impact on the standards the pupils achieve. Sixteen lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was excellent in 12.5 per cent of the lessons seen, very good in 25 per cent and good in 62.5 per cent. This picture, together with the analysis of the pupils' work, supports the judgement of very good teaching.

14. The children are given a very good start to their schooling in the Reception class where the teaching is consistently very good. The learning activities are very well planned and taught, so the children's skills are developed effectively according to their stage of maturity. Learning is enjoyable and the staff have created an exciting learning environment that makes the children want to take part and to be involved. Play activities are very clearly linked to the various areas of learning and have a very clear and specific purpose. Members of staff encourage the children to make choices, take turns and to share things with their friends and this helps to develop their confidence. This has a significant impact on their learning. Most of the children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Early writing skills are developed well and many children can write their name as well as a number of letters and words. The teacher introduces the early skills of literacy and numeracy very effectively, ensuring the children make rapid progress in these areas. There are good opportunities for role-play and the children draw on their own feelings when taking part, demonstrating good development of their social skills. The children develop a good knowledge and understanding of the world around them due to the good range of activities on offer. The use of computers is effective with stories such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and a program used to develop the children's knowledge of the life cycle of a butterfly. The staff work together very effectively and provide the children with a lively and stimulating curriculum. A particular strength of the staff is their understanding of how young children learn. They know when to allow the children to find things out for themselves and when to intervene and give support so that the children's learning moves on at a good pace. The standard of planning is of a very high quality as is the quality of the assessment of how the children are progressing. Plans are well advanced for the provision of a soft play area as part of a major refurbishment of the school's playground facilities.
15. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught throughout the school, enabling pupils of all abilities to make very good progress and to achieve very well. The mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons are brisk and provide the pupils with good skills to solve mathematical problems. In the most successful lessons, these mental 'warm-up' sessions are fun but provide the pupils with challenging activities that test their mental agility. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 where the pupils were challenged to 'beat the teacher' in completing a matrix involving the area of shapes. Where appropriate the pupils are 'set' or grouped according to their prior ability and the teachers match the work very closely to their needs. The skills of reading and writing are well taught through literacy lessons ensuring the pupils learn the basic skills quickly and effectively. The school makes effective use of staff to provide additional support for both literacy and numeracy and this helps to raise standards. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which literacy and numeracy skills are taught as an integral part of other curriculum areas. As a result, the pupils see the practical nature of the skills and regularly use them in 'real life' situations. For example, as part of their geography work they demonstrate good skills in writing in note form and reporting when they describe culture, climate and history in Mexico.
16. The teachers are very enthusiastic and this results in lessons being interesting and exciting. For example in a Year 1 history lesson, the teacher provided the pupils with a wide range of activities, including an 'archaeological dig' to help develop their understanding of the past and to learn how evidence is collected. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong and this helps the pupils to develop confidence. This was evident in discussions with pupils who stated, *'Teachers explain things really well,' 'Teachers are fair, they really help you,' 'Teachers are good friends,' and 'They've helped me to excel in some subjects.'* These relationships are developed

through the very high expectations of behaviour and work that the teachers expect from the pupils.

17. Lessons are very well planned and the teachers have a very clear understanding of what the pupils will be expected to do at the end of the lesson. These learning objectives are shared with the pupils, so they know what is expected of them. The pupils are encouraged to ask for guidance and help if they do not understand and they are made aware of their strengths and weaknesses. This helps them to focus closely on what they need to do to improve.
18. The school makes very good use of visitors to improve the quality of the pupils' learning. Artists have worked with the pupils on a range of topics, including producing very effective and attractive works which form permanent displays. A conductor from the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra has worked with pupils guiding them to compose an arrangement to a book and then performing the finished piece. Teachers make effective use of learning support assistants and they make a good contribution to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

The pupils have very good attitudes towards work and their behaviour is excellent.

19. The pupils' attitudes towards school and towards work are very good. The pupils are encouraged to avail themselves of all that the school has to offer and they do so enthusiastically. They are keen to learn and recognise the importance of working hard to improve their skills.
20. Pupils in the Reception class rapidly adapt to the classroom routines. The teacher and learning support assistant have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the quality and range of work the children are expected to undertake. The children respond very well. During whole class activities they listen carefully to the teacher and respond enthusiastically to her questioning. They are appreciative of the efforts of others and are respectful of their views and comments. They are equally respectful with learning support staff and this all helps to create a very pleasant learning environment. When required to work on their own they do so without fuss and concentrate for long periods. Because of the respect shown by the staff the children quickly develop confidence and are eager to engage visitors in conversation and to show their work. They are very sensible when moving between self-chosen activities, waiting patiently for their turn and occupying themselves with another activity until they can move on. For example, only a certain number of pupils play on the wheeled vehicles at any one time and others wait until they see there is free space before venturing outside. The ground rules concerning the high expectations of behaviour are effectively laid down in this class and no instances of misbehaviour were observed.
21. In both the infant and junior classes the pupils continue to have very good attitudes towards learning. In lessons, the pupils are very enthusiastic, and are very keen to answer and ask questions and to take part in discussions. Pupils of all abilities are keen to share ideas, but they also listen well to the views and ideas of others. When working individually, the pupils show very high levels of concentration, and produce good amounts of written work. Most pupils take pride in the presentation of their work, and try hard to respond to their teachers' suggestions for improvement. The pupils work very well together in pairs and in small groups, and willingly consider the ideas of one another. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson, the pupils worked very well in small groups, considering how best to create an animation and pupils willingly took on the different roles of director, camera operator and animator.

They 'argued' with one another as to the best approach but it was done light-heartedly and there was an obvious respect for one another's views. Pupils of all abilities are confident in their work, and this is because the teachers value their contributions and encourage them to participate.

22. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils to carry out investigative activities in science and to carry out research projects as part of their English, history and geography. The pupils enjoy these activities and this is evident in the detailed research carried out as part of their work on Mexico. The pupils are encouraged to carry out further research at home and frequently use books and the Internet to discover more about topics that have aroused their interest.
23. The standard of pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils of all ages are self-assured, and extremely polite, helpful and friendly. Older pupils, in particular, have very good levels of self-discipline, which are evident, for example, when they are briefly left unattended, and continue to work conscientiously and quietly. The pupils demonstrate high levels of respect for others, and for property, and have a very good understanding of the need to consider the feelings of others. The older pupils always set a good example to younger pupils. At playtimes, pupils of all ages play well with one another, and younger children mix very well with the older pupils who look after them well. No instances of bullying were observed during the inspection and both pupils and parents indicated that on the rare occasions it occurred it was dealt with very effectively. The pupils show high levels of respect for midday supervisors and lunchtimes are pleasant occasions, helped by the range of games and activities on offer.

The pupils are provided with a very good curriculum that is enriched through a wide variety of out of school activities.

24. The school fully meets the statutory requirements in terms of the subjects it provides for the pupils. It provides a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities that do much to enrich the learning experiences for the pupils and these contribute significantly to their overall attainment and progress and to their personal development.
25. The provision that is made for children in the Reception class is very good. The quality of the teacher's planning and organisation ensures that the needs of these young children are met very effectively. The children are provided with many opportunities to learn through role-play, using computers to practise skills and to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They develop their musical skills, regularly joining in with nursery rhymes and songs that are an integral part of the curriculum. As a joint creative arts co-ordinator the teacher has a keen interest in developing the children's artistic talents and this is reflected in the quality of creative work they produce. Reception class children are involved in whole school activities such as assemblies and this helps to ensure they feel part of the school community, and provides them with good opportunities to mix with older pupils.
26. As the pupils move into the infants and throughout the juniors there are many more opportunities for the pupils to participate in the wide range of activities. The school was recently awarded 'Artsmark Gold' status for the considerable work undertaken to develop the creative arts at the school. Whole school projects on the work of abstract artists such as Picasso, Kandinsky and Bridget Riley provide the pupils with the opportunity to see their work displayed very effectively throughout the school. The use of professional artists who work with the pupils enables the less able pupils as well as

the more talented to achieve well. The artwork adds to the pupils' multi-cultural awareness, with good examples of Indian, Chinese, African and Mexican work seen.

27. The school makes very effective use of the skills and talents of its staff. The lunchtime story club gives the pupils the opportunity to listen to a skilled story-teller, engendering a love of books. The inspection team were entertained by the pupils in the Handbell Club who, under the tutorship of the school secretary, gave a lively rendition of the Can-Can. A good number of pupils take advantage of music tuition to learn brass and woodwind instruments. The musical and dramatic talents of the pupils are demonstrated to parents through the school's regular performances. Sporting activities are a good feature of the school and both the Liverpool and Tranmere Academies have provided coaching – with obvious success as, during the inspection week, the school team won through to a national final to be held at the Millennium Stadium.
28. A good number of older pupils take advantage of the information and communication technology club and this helps to develop their computer skills. The pupils go on residential trips and take part in a wide range of educational visits to science fairs, museums and galleries. Together with the visits from poets, theatre groups, musicians and artists this helps to provide them with a very rich and varied curriculum.

The headteacher provides very good leadership and management and is very well supported by senior staff and governors.

29. The headteacher has maintained the very good leadership of his predecessor and the school has made significant progress since the previous inspection. The leadership has been very successful in moving the school forward. The standards in National Curriculum tests have improved significantly as a result of improved teaching, very good planning and very effective use of the assessment procedures. These improvements have not been made at the expense of 'squeezing' other subjects. Indeed, there is a determination amongst the staff to ensure that all of the pupils are provided with a good balance of academic, musical and sporting activities. Its success in these aims is due to the strong leadership and excellent support of all staff.
30. There are excellent procedures in place for assessing the children when they enter the Reception class and the needs of the children are identified early. Those children with special educational needs are provided with a good level of appropriate support and most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning. The more able pupils are provided with challenging activities, ensuring that they achieve well. The school has established very good links with an Early Years Centre of Excellence and has benefited from adopting some strategies. The processes for assessing the pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well established and the teachers use the information to plan future work very effectively. The co-ordinators identify areas of weakness and adapt schemes of work to ensure standards improve. Co-ordinators are very active and continually look to see how they might improve their subjects. There are good links with the feeder high school and the very good relationships enable the school to benefit from subject expertise of its staff.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well-co-ordinated and the recommendations of the new Code of Practice have been fully implemented. Pupils in the infant and junior classes are provided with very good support and there are regular meetings with parents ensuring they are kept fully informed about their child's progress.

The school makes effective use of outside agencies such as the educational psychology service, speech therapy and behaviour support.

32. The Governing Body is well-informed and has a very good awareness of what is happening in school. They approve all policies, including race equality, and ensure that they are implemented. A good number of governors are regular visitors to the school and they help in class in a variety of ways. Issues such as target-setting are discussed and they have a detailed knowledge of the standards attained by the pupils in national tests. Governors are fully conversant with all aspects of financial planning and the strategic management. They have been very involved in securing improvements to the building including a new office and a headteacher's room, and improved reception area and two new classrooms. They are working closely with the headteacher to develop the accommodation further to provide a creative arts facility and for significant improvements to the outside play areas. The school improvement plan and the longer term development plan are good working documents that give a very clear idea of what the school is doing to improve. Targets are prioritised, appropriately costed and there is clear indication as to how the school is monitoring progress.
33. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly by the senior management and by subject co-ordinators and includes the monitoring of lessons and the analysis of pupils' work. The staff benefit from clear feedback about their teaching and this is used as a focus for professional development. As a result of the effective monitoring the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection when it was broadly satisfactory with a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. An indication of this improvement is the award of advanced skills status – one of the first within the authority – to a member of staff. The quality of teaching ensures that the pupils' prior attainment is effectively built upon, ensuring most pupils achieve as well as they can.
34. The headteacher has high expectations of what can be achieved at the school. He recognises the strengths of his staff, and his deputy, an exemplar teacher, together with the senior management team, provide strong support. However, the significant strength of the school is the excellent team approach with all staff providing excellent support for one another and working very co-operatively. This creates a very positive ethos, where morale is very high and where the pupils enjoy learning.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school has no significant weaknesses.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should implement the issues outlined in the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	4	10	0	0	0	0
Percentage	12.5	25	62.5	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	214
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	192	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	17	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	143

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	495265
Total expenditure	515,414
Expenditure per pupil	2,321
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,121
Balance carried forward to next year	8,972

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	12
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	23	27	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (81)	93 (81)	83 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	11
	Girls	11	13	11
	Total	24	25	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (81)	86 (91)	76 (81)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	16	15	18
	Total	27	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (82)	81 (91)	94 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	28	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (85)	84 (94)	97 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	50	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	51	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	62	35	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	29	21	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	36	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	36	17	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	49	51	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	45	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	32	13	3	4