

INSPECTION REPORT

BLUEBERRY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 133691

Headteacher: Mr Bernard Lawton

Lead inspector: Robin Wonnacott

Dates of inspection: 15th to 19th March 2004

Inspection number: 255544

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	447
School address:	Colwell Road & Maidford Road Liverpool
Postcode:	L14 8XZ & L14 2DU
Telephone number:	0151 228 9599 & 0151 228 9234
Fax number:	0151 230 0729 & 0151 220 1970
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss E Newton
Date of previous inspection:	None. First Inspection.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Blueberry Park Primary School is situated on the eastern outskirts of Liverpool. The school was formed by the amalgamation of two primary schools in September 2002. The two sites are still in operation, as the school waits for a new building. Both the buildings offer extensive accommodation, but both are in a poor state of repair. There are 447 pupils on roll, aged from three to eleven; this makes it a large primary school compared with primary schools nationally. The majority of pupils come from families with low social and economic backgrounds. Many of the houses in the immediate vicinity of the two school buildings are boarded up. The pupils are taught in 16 classes, including two nurseries. There is also a unit for 12 pupils with complex learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (76.5%) is very high and well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (39%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need (0.9%) is below the national average, and reflects the local education authority's policy not to issue statements of educational need. The pupils' special needs are wide-ranging, but the majority relate to learning difficulties. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The percentage of pupils whose home language is not English, at 0.6%, is low. The rate at which pupils join and leave the school is above the national average. When children join the school as three-year-olds, their levels of attainment are very low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2787	Robin Wonnacott	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science and information and communication technology.
14066	Gillian Hoggard	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
2866	Robert Battey	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics, physical education and religious education.
16038	John Morris	<i>Team inspector</i>	English, geography and history.
22644	Barbara Hill	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage, art and design, design and technology and music.

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	4
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	7
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	13
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school with many strengths and few weaknesses. Pupils enter the school with extremely low levels of attainment. Pupils in Year 6 have standards in the key skills of English, mathematics and science that are below the national average. Nevertheless, their achievement is satisfactory, overall. Teaching is good. The school is in an area that shows all the signs of city deprivation. Seventy-five per cent of pupils receive free school lunches. The headteacher provides the school with good leadership. He has successfully united the staff from two schools, so that they now offer pupils a loving and safe environment where their differing needs are respected and provided for. The school gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are low.
- Teaching is good; a significant proportion is very good. Teachers, and other adults, use a range of good strategies to encourage pupils to become involved in their learning.
- The headteacher's total commitment to ensuring that the school includes all pupils in activities adds significantly to their educational and social development.
- There is good provision and support for the many pupils with special educational needs.
- The subject co-ordinators are beginning to understand the requirements of their respective roles; they do not have enough opportunities to monitor work in their subjects.
- The work of the many support staff is good; it adds to the overall good educational provision in the school.
- The range of clubs and other out-of-class activities provided for pupils is good.
- Teachers are not using assessment information in a consistent way when they plan lessons.
- Attendance levels are low.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	N/A	N/A	E*	E
mathematics	N/A	N/A	E*	D
Science	N/A	N/A	E*	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although there is a spread of ability in each year-group, the proportion of pupils with special educational need is much higher than typically seen in primary schools. There are far fewer pupils with above average ability. The knowledge and understanding of the group of children entering the Nursery classes are extremely low. There is an improvement in standards when pupils enter Year 1, but they are still well below the national average. In the 2003 tests for Year 2 pupils, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were very low; they were in the lowest five per cent compared with all schools. Standards in the 2003 tests for Year 6 pupils were very low. When compared with the results of all schools, results in English, mathematics and science were in the lowest five per cent. When the results are compared with those of similar schools, English results were well below the average; results in mathematics and science were below the average.

Inspection evidence indicates that standards in Year 2 are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and the majority of other subjects. In Year 6, standards are below average in English and mathematics. Although standards in science are still below average, work in the pupils' books indicates that standards have improved from those of 2003. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those seen in similar primary schools. Standards in other subjects show variation, but are generally below the average. Pupils from the small special needs unit attached to the school achieve well; they are fully integrated into the life of the school.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are happy at school and have positive attitudes towards learning. As they move through the school they develop good attitudes to learning, and their behaviour becomes good. Attendance levels are poor. There are some good procedures in place to encourage good attendance, but these are not used consistently in all classes.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons, teaching is carefully structured and pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn. As a result, pupils make good progress in learning. A range of clubs and other activities enhance the provision and add to the level of pupils' achievements. However, assessments are not used consistently to plan lessons that challenge all pupils in the class. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. Support staff are used to very good effect and they help pupils to make good progress in learning. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught but not enough time is given to teaching all the non-core subjects; as a result, the progress made by pupils in these subjects is sometimes slow.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides the school with good leadership; he has successfully merged the two schools into one that has the needs of the pupils at the very heart of its work. As a result, the ethos of the school is good. However, procedures for systematically checking and evaluating the school's work are not as well developed as they could be. The headteacher is not sufficiently involved in monitoring teaching and learning. Subject co-ordinators for English and science have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in these subjects; they recognise that standards need to be higher. The work of the co-ordinators for mathematics is less well developed. Governors are very supportive of the school. The majority are new to the role, and as a group they have not developed procedures that enable them to hold the school to account for its actions. The work of the governors is satisfactory, overall. The governors ensure that the school meets statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school and have no significant concerns; they regard teachers as approachable. Pupils' opinions were sought; they feel that the school is good and they are positive about the staff. They also feel that the school is helping them to learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Implement a more rigorous system for monitoring and developing the quality of teaching and learning.
- Review and further develop strategies for improving the levels of attendance.
- Develop the teachers' understanding of the ways in which day-to-day assessments are used in planning lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Overall, standards are **below average**. However, standards on entry to the school are extremely low, and pupils have made steady progress to reach the standards they do.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are low.
- Standards in speaking and listening are low.
- Work in pupils' books is generally well presented.
- Standards in information and communication technology are generally average.

Commentary

1. In the 2003 national test for eleven-year-olds, results in English, mathematics and science were very low; the school's results were in the bottom five per cent compared with all schools. When the results are compared with those of similar schools, English results were well below the average; results in mathematics and science were below the average. There was no significant difference between the results for girls and boys.

2. When children start school in the Nursery class, assessment data shows that their knowledge, skills and understanding are very much lower than those typically seen for the age group. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of the children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. However, an examination of the work of the present Year 1 pupils indicates that, when they join the Year 1 class, their levels of attainment are lower than typically found, particularly in language and communication.

3. As pupils move through the school from Year 1 to Year 6, their achievement is satisfactory. In English, levels of achievement are satisfactory. Pupils who start school with very limited vocabulary gain in confidence in using language. In mathematics, pupils achieve at a satisfactory level. Achievement in science is satisfactory, but the science curriculum does not provide pupils with enough opportunity to develop their investigative skills.

4. With only one year's result in the national tests for seven-year-olds, the evidence of pupils' attainment is limited. In reading, writing and mathematics, the school's results were in the lowest five per cent compared with all schools. The results are a reflection of the low levels of attainment pupils have when they join the Year 1 class. A significant number of the pupils did really well to reach the expected Level 2.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.1 (N/A)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.4 (N/A)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.5 (N/A)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Results in the tests for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science were similarly low; they were in the lowest five per cent when compared with all schools. This group of pupils had a significantly higher than typical number of pupils who were receiving extra help, as they had special educational needs. When compared with the results of similar schools, the English results were well below average. Results in mathematics and science were below average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.1 (N/A)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	22.4 (N/A)	26.8 (26.7)
science	24.7 (N/A)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Inspection evidence indicates that, in Year 2, the number of pupils who are on track to attain the nationally expected standard (Level 2) remains low, but is higher than in 2003. In ICT, pupils are working at a standard typically seen for this age group. Pupils with special educational needs show good levels of achievement. They are very well supported in lessons and this is having a significant, positive impact on their progress.

7. Inspection evidence indicates that the number of pupils in Year 6 who are on track to attain the nationally expected standard (Level 4) in mathematics is higher than last year. The improvement in standards is a result of more focused teaching. In English, attainment varies across different aspects of the subject. Standards in speaking and listening are low. Standards in reading and writing are low; a small number of pupils read at a level above that expected. Work in the pupils' science books indicates an improvement in standards from 2003. Standards in ICT are broadly average. Standards in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education are average. Standards in geography and history are below average. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils enter the Nursery class with extremely low levels of attainment. Although standards are still below average in Year 6, the overall levels of achievement of pupils as they move through the school are satisfactory. There are no differences in the levels of pupil achievement on the two sites.

8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The school effectively invests a lot of time, energy and finances into meeting the needs of the large number of pupils with special educational needs, most of whom have difficulties in the key skills of communication and language. These pupils all make significant gains in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, number and ICT. Nevertheless, their attainment remains well below average, particularly in English and mathematics. Their difficulties with speaking, reading and writing and their slow acquisition of new vocabulary are barriers to their learning in most of the other subjects, although this is less marked in art and design, music and physical education. The school is having a significant impact in trying to overcome these barriers.

9. The opportunities provided for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are satisfactory, and at times good. When opportunities are provided, pupils show satisfactory levels of understanding. For example, in a Year 6 ICT lesson pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the way a simple formula could be used to calculate totals on a spreadsheet.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance levels are **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, and frequently very good. They improve noticeably as pupils move through the school.
- Provision for the pupils' social and moral development is a particularly strength.
- Attendance is well below what it should be. The school has good procedures in place to raise attendance levels, but these are not consistently applied.

Commentary

10. Pupils come into the school at age three with social and personal skills which are well below those seen in other primary schools. In the Nursery and Reception classes many pupils find it hard to concentrate and listen, and to share or take turns. The school makes this aspect of pupils' development a central area of its work. Inspection evidence indicates that it is having a high level of success. Pupils in the Year 5 and 6 classes have good attitudes to work. Behaviour in and around the school is good. The close care and attention that teachers, and other adults, give to ensuring that the school's approaches to managing behaviour are used consistently has a significant positive influence on behaviour. Good behaviour is always rewarded; unacceptable behaviour is not tolerated. Although there are petty squabbles on the playground, these are quickly sorted out with lunchtime supervisors using effective approaches to developing good behaviour.

11. Pupils, and their parents and carers, feel this is a safe, friendly and supportive school where all pupils are encouraged to do their best. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop a sense of moral responsibility. For example, in a religious education lesson, Year 4 pupils were encouraged to think about mob violence in response to the story of the Last Supper. They were able to discuss why the violence might have occurred. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are noticeably more mature and sensible. In a religious education lesson, pupils were asked to empathise with Jesus' disciples after the Resurrection; they gave genuine and thoughtful responses to why the disciples acted as they did.

12. Personal development is correctly given great importance in this school, and religious education lessons make a substantial contribution to this aspect of pupils' awareness. The locally Agreed Syllabus is used very well. Moral development is especially strong. Pupils are constantly and unobtrusively reminded of desired behaviour and praised when they achieve it. This may result in receiving a reward card for completing homework, the chance to line up first to go to physical education or simple praise from teachers. All staff are very good role models. They address pupils and each other with courtesy and respect, and are calm and caring in their dealings with pupils. Each classroom contains the school rules, displayed prominently and referred to when necessary. Spiritual and social development are good. Science generates several moments of wonder; for example, when looking at the growth of bean shoots in Year 3 or when observing candles burning in Year 6. Pupils are encouraged to think about themselves and their place in the world. Foundation Stage classes plan many opportunities for children's personal development. For example, short prayers are said in the nursery, which are appropriate for the age of the children. When making Mothers' Day cards, pupils were reminded of the importance of all carers, not just mothers. There is particularly strong support for pupils with special educational needs, and they are very well integrated into the life of the school.

13. Attendance levels have remained around 87 per cent; this is too low. However, there has been some recent improvement in levels of attendance. A number of parents actively condone truancy and a small number are being prosecuted as a result. The school has a number of good systems and procedures in place to encourage attendance. The school makes first-day telephone calls to absentees; prizes are given for 100 per cent attendance and regular reminders are sent to parents. However, there are some inconsistencies between the way the two sites approach the issue. For example, one classroom contains a lively display about the importance of attendance, whereas others make no mention of it. A 'happy meal' is offered for 100 per cent attendance and this is popular with pupils, but it is not noticeably publicised, either to parents or pupils on either site.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	10.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.7
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education provided by the school is **good**. From very low levels of attainment when they enter the school, pupils make **satisfactory** gains in learning as they move through the school to attain standards that are generally below the national average in Year 6. Pupils' behaviour is **good** and this has a positive impact on their learning. Staff make **good** use of the extensive accommodation.

Teaching and learning

Teaching in the school is **good**. In three-quarters of the lessons observed, teaching was at least good, and it was often very good. Overall, teachers make satisfactory use of assessment data. However, in mathematics in particular, not enough thought is given to the way in which assessments should influence the planning of lessons. Teaching assistants are used in a very positive way to help pupils learn. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good teaching in small groups; this enables them to make good gains in learning. There is no difference in the quality of provision on the two sites.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use effective techniques when they question pupils.
- Lessons are conducted at a good pace.
- Very good relationships exist between staff and pupils.
- Behaviour in lessons is good.
- Teaching assistants are used to good effect.
- Assessment data is not always used to maximum effect when lessons are planned.

Commentary

14. During the inspection, the quality of teaching observed was good. In just under three-quarters of the lessons observed teaching was judged to be good or very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Evidence gathered through scrutinising pupils' work and holding discussions with pupils indicates that the teaching observed during the inspection is typical of that usually found in the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	9 (15%)	33 (57%)	16 (28%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

15. In the very good lessons, the teachers used high quality questioning techniques to make sure that pupils had understood the work. The teacher asked the same question in a number of different ways to check pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson where pupils were developing their knowledge of the way materials can be changed, the teacher encouraged pupils to think of a number of situations where changes take place. The pupils suggested a range of examples, and the teacher made sure that they related the change to a 'chemical' or a physical' change. By the end of the session, the vast majority of pupils were clear about the difference, and

were able to provide examples of both types of changes. The pupils had made good gains in their learning.

16. In lessons where teaching was satisfactory, a common weakness was the relatively slow pace of the lesson; the pupils were not excited by the materials and they lost interest in the lesson. As a result, their learning was restricted. In a Year 2 English lesson where pupils were learning about sequencing events, the teacher made satisfactory use of a range of resources to help pupils understand the sequence of events when chickens hatch. However, a small number of pupils were clear about the cycle and became restless; they lost interest in the activity.

17. Teaching in English lessons is good. Teachers are making good use of the national guidance for literacy; they plan lessons to take account of the needs of different groups of pupils. Good teaching also occurs in mathematics lessons. Teachers are making satisfactory use of the national guidance for developing pupils' numeracy skills. However, during the inspection, teachers kept rigidly to their weekly plan; they do not take enough account of what pupils have, or have not, learnt in the previous lesson. Information and communication technology is used to support teaching and learning in a number of subjects, including English and mathematics.

18. Teaching in the two Nursery classes and Reception classes is good. Good use is made of classroom assistants. They provide valuable support to pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, and ensure that pupils who may be reluctant to suggest answers are fully involved in the lessons.

19. Teaching assistants are used well throughout the school. In the best lessons their work is excellent. They are clear about what individual pupils are expected to learn. They are fully committed to helping individual pupils, and the pupils respond in a very positive way, making significant gains in learning.

20. Teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good throughout the school, from nursery to Year 6. The two teachers, who frequently work with pupils with special educational needs in small groups or on a one-to-one basis across both sites, have good knowledge of the pupils' needs and effectively promote the development of key literacy skills.

21. Overall, assessment procedures are **satisfactory**. The school has started to analyse the nationally provided test results to identify pupils who will need help if they are going to reach the expected standard for seven and eleven-year-olds. In some lessons, particularly in mathematics, teachers do not make enough use of on-the-spot assessments when they plan the next lesson. As a result, some pupils are expected to move on to the next stage of learning when they have not fully understood the previous activity. Pupils' books are regularly marked. The best marking helps pupils understand ways in which they could improve their work. However, this approach to marking is not consistent in all classes.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** overall. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. The school provides a **good** range of learning opportunities; these enrich the overall provision for pupils. The school makes **good** use of a wide range of clubs and activities that enhance pupils' learning. Overall, accommodation and resources are **good**. However, the buildings are in a poor state of repair.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum provision is good. It is enhanced through a wide range of clubs and activities.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils are very good.
- Good use is made of ICT to support the curriculum.
- Support staff are used well. Their work supports pupils' learning across all aspects of the curriculum.

- There is ample space in both buildings. Good use is made of spare classrooms. Both buildings are in a poor state of repair.
- There are good resources to support teaching and learning.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is **good** overall. Good use is made of national guidance for literacy and numeracy. All subjects are taught and all statutory requirements are met. In the Nursery and Reception classes the national guidance for this age group is well used and all six areas of development are covered. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught a foreign language. Planning of the curriculum is good and is either related to national strategies or the adopted commercial schemes. However, time allocated to some subjects, in particular geography and history, is too little and this limits the progress made by pupils. There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). This provision is effectively linked to the school's religious education teaching. A very good school council conducts its affairs in a most effective manner, making good use of agenda and minutes. It makes thorough evaluations of ways in which the school can be improved. Good links are made across the curriculum for the pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills.

23. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is **good**. The work given to pupils is at the correct level and they understand what is expected of them. This is helping them to achieve well. Pupils who need help with their social, emotional and behavioural development are also well supported. Support staff work closely with teachers, providing good support for pupils with many and different special educational needs.

24. There is equality of opportunity for all pupils, and the school is fully inclusive in all its policies and practices. Both sites are equally committed to this aspect of the school's work. It is a particular strength of the school.

25. Good use is made of visits and visitors. For example, the good input from literacy and numeracy consultants from the local education authority has helped teachers with these two aspects of their work. Parents are involved in helping with, and supporting, a range of clubs and activities. A number of the activities are focused on the needs of the parents, whilst others are for their children. For example, the morning breakfast clubs, held on both of the schools' sites, are well supported and provide an important extra dimension to the pupils' lives. Recent visits have been made by Year 2 to Wigan Pier as part of their history studies. Pupils in all years, except Year 1, make residential visits to Colomendy in North Wales. Good displays in school celebrate the wide range of activities provided by the school. The school choir has sung in public as part of the 'Children of Liverpool Sing' festival and also sings in residential homes for the elderly. The school uses local churches for Christmas services and the local vicar is a regular visitor. Coaches from local football clubs visit the school to help pupils improve their skills.

26. The school has a good range of clubs and activities. These include football training and competition with other schools, cross-country running and participation in inter-school events. There is athletics training for Years 3 and 4, a dance club for Years 5 and 6 and an aerobics club. A local charitable organisation, the 'Lister Steps', enhances the overall provision and the contact with the community.

27. The range and quantity of resources are good. Teachers make good use of the resources and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The good provision of resources for ICT supports the pupils' learning well in many subjects where good, relevant software is used effectively by teachers and pupils. Because there has been a decrease in the number of pupils on both sites, there are surplus classrooms. The school is making good use of all the extra rooms available, for example, by using them for small group work. On the other hand, the buildings are in a very poor state of repair. The caretaker and his cleaning staff do very well to keep the buildings clean and tidy and good displays around the school present a good learning environment for the pupils. Plans have been drawn for the new school. The local education authority intends to have the new building open in September 2005.

Care, guidance and support

Very good procedures are in place to ensure the care, welfare, and safety of the pupils. **Good** monitoring procedures enable the school to support and guide pupils. The school seeks pupils' views, and their views are well respected and acted on, when appropriate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel secure and well cared for in school. Relationships with staff are very good.
- There are good induction arrangements.
- The school seeks pupils' views through the school council, and acts on them when appropriate.
- There are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
- Child protection procedures are effective
- There is good monitoring of the pupils' personal development.

Commentary

28. The good induction arrangements for pupils take into account the fact that many join the school at various points in their education. There is good support for new arrivals to help them settle into the school. Class teachers prepare their class to welcome new pupils, and they are soon integrated into the life of the school.

29. Staff work very well as a team to guide and care for pupils. Despite some difficult or unpleasant behaviour they offer unconditional love and support to pupils. As a result, the overwhelming majority of pupils feel there is at least one adult they can trust, which in turn means they feel safe, secure and valued. Pupils' views and opinions are sought and respected. The school council offers a valuable opportunity for pupils to express their views: the council meets regularly and has been involved in, for example, altering dinnertime procedures. They have also been invited to attend a governing body meeting to talk about the school motto.

30. Child protection procedures are strong and unified across both sites. The inclusion team plays a vital role in safeguarding the interests of all children, particularly those with special educational needs. As part of this team, learning mentors are a crucial part of the education process. Their roles are many and varied, but always with the aim of helping pupils maximise their achievement. For example, they involve telephone calls and home visits to ensure higher levels of attendance. There are also one-to-one or small group sessions on such topics as anger management or friendships. In addition, the inclusion team may refer pupils to outside agencies, such as child psychologists or other specialists. Like all members of school staff they work well as a team and have the interests of the pupils as their first priority. The provision is good on both school sites.

31. However, there is less emphasis on pupils' academic achievement; assessment procedures are not used consistently by all teaching staff when planning the next stage of learning.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and the local community. The Parents' Centre provides **very good** support for those in the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The education and support programmes for parents are very good and a strength of the school.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school's work.
- Links with the community are good.
- Written communications sent out to parents are not always adequate.

Commentary

32. Overall, responses to the pre-inspection parents' questionnaire and comments made at the parents' meeting were good. Parents are more than satisfied with the educational provision in the school.

33. The school provides an extensive array of support and guidance programmes for its parents and others in the local community. Parents are welcomed into classes to help with their children, which for some is a stepping stone to attending the Parents' Centre. For example, a father helps out weekly in the nursery, and is a positive model for the children. The Foundation Stage teachers are particularly good at welcoming and involving parents. Parents are asked to help their children settle in well by providing information about their likes and dislikes when they join the nursery. The Parents' Centre itself offers tremendous opportunities for parents to get involved, whether through relaxation courses such as Chinese cookery or beauty therapy, or certificated learning such as computer courses. The positive feedback given by parents helps to ensure the continuing success of the centre. Family learning, such as numeracy and literacy sessions, have also been very successful. Some of these take place during the breakfast club sessions. Other services, such as an after-school club and crèche for those attending courses, have been very popular and, in some cases, acted as a spur to further learning by parents.

34. Parents are hugely appreciative of the school and their views on its work are very positive. They particularly like the fact that their children are happy at school, make good progress and are expected to work hard. They think the school is approachable and well managed, and that their views are respected. However, a minority of parents actively condones truancy and quite a number are not supportive in getting their children to attend regularly. Homework is not always completed.

35. Although a majority of parents say they get good information about their children's progress, annual reports are unsatisfactory. They lack any reference to National Curriculum levels or clear ways for pupils to improve. Some reports have little information about what the child knows and understands, particularly in subjects like music, history and geography. The Governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus both have minor omissions. However, information on notice boards around the school is good and well targeted, explaining, for example, what parents can expect to see happening in the nursery sessions.

36. There are a number of good links with the local community. Pupils use the study support centre at Liverpool Football club, collect harvest festival contributions for the Sisters of Mercy charity and use the local area for geography trips. The partnership with Sure Start is especially valuable as it funds, among other initiatives, the courses for parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership. The contributions of other key staff to leadership and management are **satisfactory** and improving rapidly. Governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a total commitment to meeting the needs of all the pupils attending the school and the school being a major factor in the local community.
- Although the school development plan shows how the school will improve provision in different subjects of the curriculum, it does not contain a clear vision for the overall development of the school.
- The headteacher, with strong support from the deputy headteacher, has successfully amalgamated the staff and governors from the two sites. However, there is still some way to go and the subject co-ordinators have not established effective practices in all subjects.

- Governors play an important role in financial management and staffing, but are not sufficiently aware of educational standards in the school.

Commentary

37. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future of the school and sees it as a vital source of services and support in the local community, beyond providing high quality education and care for its pupils. This is laudable, and he has played a significant role in trying to establish parity of provision whilst the school is based on two sites. He has successfully developed a sense of unity among the staff and they hold him in high esteem. There is an increasing number of examples of activities which bring pupils from the two sites together, including the work of the school council, educational visits and arts and sporting activities. However, the school development plan does not represent this vision accurately. It is little more than a series of action plans for the subjects of the curriculum and aspects of the school's work, such as assessment and inclusion. It does not set out the big picture of where the school is, where it wants to get to and how it is going to get there. As such, it is not an effective tool for managing change.

38. The staff have a common vision and sense of purpose. There is a shared commitment to meeting the personal needs of all the pupils and raising academic standards. A great deal has been done in less than two years to establish parity of provision across the two sites. The deputy headteacher, three assistant headteachers and special educational needs and inclusion teams are making a significant contribution to the work of the school at this time of great change. Subject co-ordinators are working very hard to establish good partnerships across the two sites. However, leadership and management by co-ordinators are currently only satisfactory overall. The headteacher and co-ordinators have not undertaken sufficient monitoring of teaching and learning themselves to provide senior staff with a clear picture of the quality of classroom practice, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics.

39. The governing body is very supportive of the school and ensures that its work meets all statutory requirements. It has played an important role in developing the idea that this two site school is one school. For example, they approved the purchase of a school mini-bus and the provision of a school sweatshirt for all pupils. Governors and staff successfully fostered the amalgamation by allowing pupils to come up with ideas for the new school name and motto. Experienced governors play an important role in encouraging new members to participate in training and actively contribute to meetings and decisions. There are designated governors for key aspects of the school's work, such as literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and health and safety, who liaise well with the relevant members of staff. However, they are not sufficiently involved in the production and monitoring of the school development plan and they do not have a good enough understanding of the academic standards in the school, or what needs to be done to improve them. Financial management by the governors, headteacher and office staff is effective. Available funding is used well to meet the needs of the pupils. A good indicator of the success of the amalgamation of the two sites and staff morale is the fact that there has not been a significant issue with regard to staff recruitment and retention.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	890,733
Total expenditure	826,915
Expenditure per pupil	1,970

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to the next	63,857

40. The school has satisfactory procedures to ensure that it applies the principles of best value. Funding for the school is relatively low, standards are low, but pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory. Taking all these factors into consideration, the school gives good value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

41. The vast majority of children join the Nursery class with levels of skill that are well below those expected for their age. There are very few children with skills that match or exceed these expectations, and many more children than usual have speech or language difficulties. These children become increasingly confident in speaking as they move through the Nursery and Reception classes. Children make good progress in all areas of learning as a result of good teaching. Provision on the two sites is equally good.

42. The teachers and teaching assistants have good knowledge and understanding of the learning goals for children of this age, and they plan the curriculum so that pupils learn through practical and play experiences. Parents are welcomed into the school. They are provided with good information through regular meetings; they are encouraged to take part in workshops with their children. The support provided for parents with young children is a strength of the work in the Nursery and Reception classes. The classes are fully inclusive and provide pupils with a very good range of opportunities to learn and develop. Children with special educational needs achieve well and have effective support. Assessment is thorough and constructive, and this enables the school to meet the needs of individual children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show very immature personal skills.
- Staff have high expectations.
- Adults are very good role models for the children.
- Children grow in confidence and independence.

Commentary

43. From tentative beginnings, when they first start in the nursery, the children learn to play together happily and share or take turns with the toys and equipment. Staff have high expectations of the children, and teaching is very good in this area of learning. As a result, the children settle quickly into school life and feel secure.

44. Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes provide very good role models for children and treat them and each other with care and respect. The children quickly understand how to behave and what is expected of them. Close relationships are evident when special times, such as snack times, are shared. Warm welcomes are given to new children and visitors, who are greeted with a song: *'Very pleased to meet you.'* This enables children to settle quickly and to grow in confidence and independence. Good development in personal independence is seen in many different ways: giving out straws and serviettes at milk times, deciding to put on their coats for outdoor play and joining in 'tidy-up-time' with a willingness to help. Children make very good progress from a very low attainment on entry, but will not have reached the nationally expected standard when they enter the Year 1 classes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are very poor on entry to the Nursery classes.
- Very good opportunities are provided for children to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Adults are skilful in extending children's language by joining in the play.
- The effective use of reading and writing together helps children develop their language.

Commentary

45. Children start school with poor language skills. Teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to develop children's speaking and listening skills. For example, they sit with the children in the Nursery classes at 'healthy fruit' times and discuss with each other the types of fruit they like to eat. Effective questioning helps the children to develop one word answers into a sentence, such as '*Oranges are juicy*'. Adults support children's use of imaginative language well when they join in their play about 'the vet's' or 'the garden shop'.

46. Good imaginative teaching makes lessons fun. For example, the teacher in a Reception class used a 'lucky bag' for the children to delve into, to find picture cards and then match the initial letter to the correct sound mat. Children enjoy painting letters and making their shapes in collage. Guided reading is very well taught in the Reception classes. For example, after reading the 'Very Hungry Caterpillar' the children retold the story by making a flannel graph showing the order in which the caterpillar ate the fruit. Children's writing is at a very early stage of development, though most use a pencil correctly and can make marks at the well-resourced writing tables. Children wrote a poem together about 'mum' to put in their Mothers' Day cards. The teacher wrote their thoughts on a flip chart; they were then read together and produced on the computer so every child could have a copy. From a very low attainment on entry the children make satisfactory progress, but standards are well below the expected levels for children aged five.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, with effective planning and a lively pace.
- Children make good progress from a very low level of attainment.
- Resources for counting and pattern making are good.
- Children's mathematical language is slow to develop.

Commentary

47. The children come into school with skills which are much lower than those expected for this age group. They make good progress because of the imaginative teaching; this includes topics that are interesting to the children, for example by counting down from 10 to 0 before a rocket blasts off. They are able to use language such as 'the biggest' and 'the smallest' when they draw round and paint pictures of their classmates. The teachers in the Reception classes develop the children's awareness of pattern through providing them with tasks such as arranging coloured shapes and threading beads. They encouraged the use of mathematical language when the children described the patterns they had made in the bracelets of coloured pasta for Mothers' Day, reciting '*blue/red/blue/red*'.

48. In the Nursery classes, children can count everyday objects up to 10 and enjoy singing number rhymes, such as 'Five little ducks'. Lively teaching keeps lessons moving at a good pace so that the children are interested to learn. The children make good progress, but are not on course to reach the early learning goals set nationally for children at the end of the Reception year. As a result, their attainment is below average when they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good range of activities that are centred on children's interests.
- Children are encouraged to investigate using all their senses.
- Good teaching enables children to learn well.

Commentary

49. The children can build and construct with a wide range of objects, selecting appropriate resources. They build castles in the sand and make a farm with the 'small world' equipment. They choose an activity on the 'outside planning board'; for example, washing the cars, planting daffodil bulbs or building with the giant Lego equipment.

50. Teaching is good and often very good, so children make at least good progress. The children use technology with growing confidence when supported by an adult. They can find out and identify some features of living things and look at similarities and differences between different animals. For example, a display on the wall shows the life cycle of a butterfly and children can talk about the way their caterpillars changed into chrysalises and then into butterflies. A picture of their visit to a supermarket shows them going in March, when the grass was dry, and they remember the difference in the weather when they went at Christmas. These opportunities help children to understand the passage of time.

51. The use of a very good collection of rocks and shells encourages the children to investigate the similarities and differences between the different stones and shells. Pupils are encouraged to observe very carefully. Similarly, they look closely at fruit and vegetables, smelling the scent and feeling the texture. Children use a multitude of objects to make models of children's toys. Very good teaching means that children achieve well, but they will not attain the level expected for Year 1 pupils.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a wide range of indoor activities to choose from.
- Limited space for outdoor play hinders progress.
- A lack of readily available large fixed apparatus outside limits children's daily opportunities.

Commentary

52. Throughout the day, children in both the Nursery and Reception classes have a wide range of opportunities for physical development; they achieve the fine motor skills of using pencils or paints. They move freely with pleasure and confidence when using outdoor equipment. For example, they can change speed and direction when riding the bicycles and scooters, or driving the large wheeled toys.

53. The lack of large pieces of equipment, such as a climbing frame, means that children do not have readily available equipment to practise all the physical skills. Although the hard play area outside is small, staff make good use of the hall for physical education.

54. The children make good progress, but will not have attained the expected level when they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching ensures children achieve well.
- There are good role play opportunities with adult support.
- Planning of resources for collage and other work in art is very good.

Commentary

55. Teaching in this area is very good; as a result, the children learn well and make good progress. Children are encouraged to explore colour, pattern and shape. They can mix their own paints, which they splash to make symmetrical patterns. The children know many songs, which they sing tunefully with good rhythm and dynamics; they are confident in performing before an audience. Very good use of praise inspired the children in the nursery to join in the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' by playing musical instruments to match the characters of the goats.

56. Adults support children's creative skills by joining in the role play and providing resources to stimulate imaginative language. The children particularly enjoyed playing in the home corner, wrapping up their babies because '*It is cold*' and deciding '*She is going out in a minute when it stops raining*'. The children are well on course to reach the levels expected in Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The most successful teaching develops the pupils' appreciation of the ways in which language and literature can enrich the quality of their lives.
- The key skills of speaking and listening are not always given sufficient priority.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support that enables them to achieve well in English and understand work in other subjects better.

Commentary

57. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are currently below average in Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing. This includes the large numbers of pupils in all year groups with special educational needs, some of whom make very significant gains in these skills in relation to their capabilities. The majority of these pupils have significant learning difficulties in the key skills of communication and literacy. Many pupils, not just those with special educational needs, have considerable difficulties in saying what they know and understand and expressing their opinions. A significant number of pupils have a very narrow vocabulary to express themselves with, both verbally and in writing. Nearly all pupils join in and read quite well in whole class and small group activities. However, many of them are rather reluctant readers on their own; they lack confidence and often do not use their knowledge of phonics or the context to 'have a go' when faced with unfamiliar words. Whilst many pupils have well below average skills of presentation and vocabulary, the teaching enables them to significantly improve their understanding of language structures, writing for different purposes and how authors work.

58. The data available on standards is only for 2003. This shows that standards were extremely low compared with all schools nationally and very low compared with similar schools, both at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. The school gave a very high priority to improving the pupils' reading skills in its first year and this remains a priority this year. Based on the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by an Education Action Zone consultant, the co-ordinators have, this year, raised the profile of specific aspects of writing and target-setting. This has proved very effective in enabling all pupils to make good gains in reading and writing skills. In particular, there are a small number of more able pupils in Year 6 who should achieve the higher than expected level in the national tests and, because of this good provision, they probably will.

59. Teaching and learning are good overall. They were good in the majority of the lessons seen; they were very good in a small number, and satisfactory in a small number. Lessons were seen in all year groups but not in all classes. Several literacy skills sessions were also seen involving small groups of pupils with special educational needs, from Years 4, 5 and 6. No significant differences were observed between different year groups or the two sites.

60. Common strengths in nearly all the lessons were the encouragement and engagement of all pupils, the use and contribution of support staff and the management of pupils' behaviour. In the best lessons, the teachers successfully conveyed a love of language and literature to the pupils. The pupils were highly motivated to think about what the authors were trying to say and, consequently, how they could improve their own writing. When they are most successful, teachers achieve a good balance between developing the pupils' creativity, and helping them both to be more accurate with spelling, grammar and punctuation and to take greater care with their handwriting and the layout of their work. Very occasionally, in lessons judged to be good or satisfactory overall, not all pupils were suitably challenged or supported in relation to their abilities. The most significant

weakness, within this positive picture of teaching and learning, is that teachers do not always maximise opportunities for pupils to talk during whole class activities, and this is essential for many of the pupils at this school.

61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are two co-ordinators for English, one on each of the two sites. They have established a good working partnership and, in particular, attend training sessions together every fortnight. They have made good use of the findings of an Education Action Zone consultant's monitoring of lessons throughout the school. They have analysed the results of national tests and other standardised tests, but identified action has largely arisen from the more detailed analysis carried out by the consultant.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Language and literacy are used well to promote learning in other subjects. Pupils learn about different styles of writing for different purposes, such as letters, chronological reports, planning in design and technology and writing up scientific investigation and experiments. Good examples of work which showed how this helps pupils learn in other subjects were seen in displays of history work in Years 4 and 5, and science and ICT work in many classrooms.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by pupils are improving.
- The teaching observed during the inspection was good.
- Teachers make good use of the national guidance for teaching numeracy.
- Teachers plan their lessons in detail, but they do not make sufficient use of assessment data to plan the next stage of learning.
- Teachers offer good levels of encouragement to their pupils, engaging them well in lessons.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not well developed.
- Pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve their work.
- Pupils show good attitudes to their work and there is a good promotion of equality of opportunity.

Commentary

63. When pupils enter the Nursery classes, their understanding of mathematical ideas is very low. Results in the 2003 national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds were well below the national average. The quality of teaching varies across the school, from being very good to satisfactory, and, as a result, standards attained by pupils are starting to rise. Inspection evidence indicates that standards have risen, but they are still below the national average. This is an improvement from the extremely low levels of attainment when pupils enter the school, and means that pupils' levels of achievement are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support in their classes and they achieve well. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support this group of pupils.

64. The national guidance for developing pupils' skills in numeracy is being used to good effect. As a result, the pupils are developing their understanding of number well. In Year 2, pupils successfully mentally double and halve numbers up to ten. Higher attaining pupils work out subtraction and addition sums with numbers up to ten and beyond, solving associated problems. Year 6 pupils show a good knowledge of the twelve times table. They are able to quickly use calculators to work out such sums as one sixth of 300 and one seventh of £1,400.

65. Overall, the teaching of mathematics across the school is good. During the inspection, eight lessons were observed; teaching was very good in two, good in four and satisfactory in the remaining two lessons. The most consistently high standard of teaching was seen in the Year 6 classes where teaching was good and very good. Here, the work given to pupils was challenging, and tasks were appropriately modified to meet their discerned needs. Pupils respond very well to the challenge offered them by quickly and accurately completing their calculations with high levels of enthusiasm and motivation. Across the school, pupils' attitudes are good.

66. Work in pupils' books is generally well presented. Teachers mark the books regularly, but they do not always use pupils' work to inform their planning for the next stage of learning. Too often marking is just ticks and comments on how well the pupils have done. In a few lessons, all the pupils are given the same task. When this happens, only the pupils with special educational needs, whose achievement is good, are given tasks appropriately modified to meet their discerned needs. In some classes, for example in a Year 6 class, tasks and resources are modified well to meet the pupils' previously assessed needs.

67. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The two co-ordinators are starting to work together in a satisfactory way; they have observed some teaching. The subject is well supported by the input from the local education authority's numeracy consultant. However, the intention in the subject action plan to monitor and evaluate teaching across the school has not been met. As a result, the best teaching practice in the school has not been shared with other colleagues. Accommodation and resources are good. Provision for mathematics is equally good on both sites.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Pupils satisfactorily use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects, aiding their understanding of its use in practice. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in geography and science, or measure materials in design and technology. They successfully use ICT to display mathematical data in graphical form.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned and resources are used well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about science.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their scientific investigative skills are limited.

Commentary

69. With only one year's results in national tests available, it is not possible to make a detailed analysis of pupils' performance over time. In 2003, the school's results for eleven-year-olds were in the lowest five per cent, compared with all schools. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs was very high in this year group. The school's results were well below those of schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

70. In lessons, there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, and pupils achieve at a satisfactory level, including those identified as having special educational needs. There is a good range of work in the pupils' books, showing that the school covers the national programme of work in science. Work in the books of Year 6 pupils is of a satisfactory standard and includes work on microbes, the way substances change and a small amount of work showing that pupils have been involved in some scientific investigations. However, this aspect of work in science

is underdeveloped. Overall, work in the pupils' books shows satisfactory development as pupils move from Year 3 to Year 6, although the standard of work seen was lower than that expected for this age group. In discussion, Year 6 pupils were able to talk in detail about many of the aspects of science they have covered. The higher attaining pupils use scientific language appropriately. For example, they are able to explain the difference between evaporation and condensation and they know how these processes can be used to separate different substances. Inspection evidence indicates that, in science, the school's results in the 2004 tests for eleven-year-olds will be higher than those of 2003. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in science. They are well supported by teaching assistants who provide good support for small groups of pupils.

71. The quality of teaching is good overall. Six lessons were observed; teaching was good in four and satisfactory in the remaining two. In all the lessons observed, the teachers demonstrated good scientific knowledge, using the correct scientific language; pupils were also encouraged to use scientific terms correctly. Planning for lessons was detailed and resources were well used. For example, in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were developing their understanding of the differences between chemical and physical changes, the pupils were able to give everyday examples of the difference between the two types of change. All but a small number of lower attaining pupils could explain that when a chemical change took place, *'You couldn't get the stuff back again'*. In lessons where the teaching was satisfactory, the pace of the lesson was often slow. In a Year 3 lesson, where pupils were developing their understanding of plants and the conditions they need to have to grow, the first part of the lesson was conducted at a slow pace and a small number of the pupils lost interest. Although teachers mark the pupils' books regularly, the marking does not always give pupils enough guidance about ways in which they might improve their work.

72. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The co-ordinators are clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and they understand what needs to be done if the school's results are to improve. Only a limited amount of monitoring of science teaching has taken place. Resources for science are good; they are well organised. Resources are shared to good effect between the two sites. There is no difference between the provision on the two sites.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 6 are in line with those found in other primary schools.
- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects.
- Resources, in particular the number of computers, are good.
- The subject is well managed by two enthusiastic co-ordinators.

Commentary

73. The provision of resources for ICT are good. Both school sites have well equipped computer suites and many classrooms have interactive whiteboards. The staff are making good use of the whiteboards, using them to support work in a range of subjects. At the age of seven, pupils are attaining satisfactory standards. Standards at the age of eleven are generally in line with national expectations. However, there is a weakness in the pupils' understanding of ways in which computers can be used to control events. The school is aware of this, and the co-ordinators have plans to improve provision in this aspect of ICT. Discussion with Year 6 pupils, and a scrutiny of their work, indicates that standards in many aspects of ICT are average; for example in word processing. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the way computers can be used to help in the production of spreadsheets. The highest attaining Year 6 pupils are able to develop a

mathematical formula to add data on a spreadsheet. They are also able to predict the changes that will occur when information on the sheet is changed. Teaching staff are confident when using the computers; this confidence is passed on to the pupils who are equally at home when using the different programs available.

74. Six ICT lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was judged to be good in four and satisfactory in two. In all the lessons, the staff were very conversant with the computer program they were using. The lessons were well planned and pupils made progress in using the computers. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils were taught how to add data to a set of records that had been created by the teacher. By the end of the lesson, the majority of pupils were able to explain what a record and a field were; they were able to add their own information in the appropriate fields. In the two lessons where teaching was satisfactory, the pace of the lesson was slower and as a result learning took place at only a satisfactory pace.

75. The work of the co-ordinators is good. They have a good understanding of the way in which ICT can be used to enhance pupils' learning across a range of subjects. The co-ordinators are clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the subject; they provide colleagues with valuable support.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Information and communication technology is being used to support work in a number of subjects including English, mathematics and science. The co-ordinators are aware of the need to extend this aspect of ICT provision, so that the high level of provision for ICT can be fully used to develop all aspects of pupils' learning. This aspect of the school's work is better than that seen in many primary schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop a good awareness of the Christian religion and other faiths.
- Religious education is used well to develop pupils' awareness of moral and social issues.
- Teachers provide pupils with good role models.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good, and there is a good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum.

Commentary

77. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily, showing good attitudes to their work in religious education.

78. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Six lessons were observed. Teaching was good in three and satisfactory in the other three. The good teaching all occurred in the classes with Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils. In these lessons, the teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve were higher and there was a more effective use of resources. As a result, pupils' learning was more evident. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well in lessons; they make satisfactory progress

79. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of the Christian faith and other major faiths of the world. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the pupils showed a clear understanding of Jesus being God's son and they were able to explain in simple terms the story of Lent. Samples of pupils' work show good links between religious education and the social and moral aspects of pupils'

development. For example, work in books is helping pupils to explain the impact of rich and poor parts of society on its overall development. Pupils are encouraged to use their growing literacy skills in their written work. They have also used numeracy skills to produce timelines in understanding the times related to the Bible and books of other faiths. Visits by pupils to local churches, and visits to the school by representatives of these churches, enhance the pupils' understanding.

80. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The present co-ordinator has a good level of subject expertise. The locally Agreed Syllabus is well used and supports the planning and delivery of the subject. Monitoring of the school's work has started, but not all classes have been visited. Although resources are satisfactory overall, there are not sufficient resources in all classes. For example, children's Bibles for pupils to read and understand are in short supply. Good use of ICT is made to further aid the pupils' understanding. Good links are made with PSHE and citizenship. Religious education lessons provide a good input into the pupils' spiritual and moral development. These lessons, supported by the very good ethos of the school, do much to aid the pupils' understanding of the role religion plays in peoples' lives. There is no difference in the provision for religious education between the two sites

HUMANITIES

81. Work in the humanities was not a focus of this inspection. **Geography** and **history** were sampled. There was insufficient time to observe any lessons, examine school documentation or hold discussions with the subject co-ordinators. Displays in all classrooms and a sample of Year 6 pupils' books were scrutinised, and very brief discussions were held with a few pupils. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to make reliable judgements about the overall provision in these subjects.

82. In **geography**, the evidence seen suggests that pupils in Year 6 on the Maidford site have completed considerably more work than those on the Colwell site between September 2003 and March 2004. All pupils have made satisfactory progress in acquiring geographical facts and in understanding how to carry out field studies. In **history**, there is a similar difference in the amount and range of work completed. On the Maidford site, pupils have completed work on several different aspects of twentieth century British history but on the Colwell site most of the work completed has been specific to World War II. All of the work seen was marked and, at times, helpful comments were made to help pupils understand what they had or had not learnt.

83. For both these subjects, the evidence seen indicates that:

- teaching and learning are satisfactory;
- standards are below average at the end of Year 6;
- they make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development;
- they make a satisfactory contribution to consolidating and extending the pupils' key literacy and numeracy skills;
- the school provides satisfactory learning experiences.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. This aspect of the school's work was not a focus of the inspection. One lesson was observed in music, one in art and design and four in physical education. It is not possible to give a judgement on provision in individual subjects.

85. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that in **art and design** standards are **average**. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to develop their skills, and the quality of displays within classes and across the school are good. Staff expertise and enthusiasm for the subject are clearly shown in the range of artwork across the school. For example, in Year 1 the pupils have been learning about 'sculpture from nature'. They produced very good three-dimensional sculptures which included a

backdrop with an arrangement of cones, leaves and dried flowers. By Year 6 pupils are making good use of sketchbooks for pencil drawings. However, although the inspection evidence indicates that pupils are making satisfactory progress in art and design, a more structured approach to teaching the skills of observational drawing would enhance the standards attained by pupils.

86. No lessons were observed in **design and technology**. However, a scrutiny of the work on display around the school and in pupils' folders and books, indicates that standards in design and technology are **average** in both Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 made moving pictures with sliders and related them to push and pull forces in science. Pupils studied materials in Year 2 when making puppets and planned how to make them, listing materials, methods used, results found and an evaluation of the work. They wrote '*We had to practise lots of skills first*'. Year 4 has been learning about food technology, including the importance of eating healthy foods and how to make a cheese sandwich. A display of photographs shows the structures the pupils have made in Year 6. They searched for information on the Internet on 'shelters' and made plans of seating for children, with ramps for the disabled.

87. The limited evidence available indicates that standards in **music** are **average**. Two assemblies were seen when the singing was tuneful, expressive and enjoyable. Pitch and dynamics were accurate and the pupils could keep the beat when they clapped the chorus. Posters show that they have been learning about musical instruments in an orchestra. Resources are satisfactory, with a wide range of instruments from different cultures. In the lesson seen, the pupils were learning about pitch and accompanying songs by playing the instruments that matched the high, low and in between sounds. Standards attained by pupils in this lesson were average.

88. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in **physical education** are average. During the week of inspection it was not possible to see lessons in the Year 6 class. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about standards in this subject. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards and they achieve well. The two lessons seen, in Years 3 and 4, indicated that standards were broadly average and the pupils achieved satisfactorily. For example, in Years 2 and 3 the pupils used the apparatus well; they showed a wide range of relevant movements on and off the floor in response to the apparatus they were using. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in physical education lessons and they achieve well.

89. The quality of teaching is good, overall. There is good use of time and resources. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their skills through the good range of extra-curricular activities and competitive sports that are available. Coaches from local football clubs, such as Liverpool and Everton, help pupils to improve their skills.

90. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Some equipment, such as benches and large mats, are getting worn and are in need of replacing. Provision on both sites is of equal quality.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. Although no lessons were seen in this area of the school's work, other evidence indicates that provision is **good**. The attention the school gives to this aspect of its work is well rewarded.

92. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. There is a good programme of activities, including work on diet, health, sex and relationships. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy life style, gain confidence and interact with others. Pupils see the school council as an important way in which they influence the work of the school, and it is providing them with a good grounding in citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The Overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since the last inspection	8
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of the management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7); not applicable (8).