

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BROAD SQUARE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Norris Green

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 133335

Headteacher: Mrs E Spencer

Lead inspector: Laura Sparrow

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 255614

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	323
School address:	Broad Square Norris Green Liverpool
Postcode:	L11 1BS
Telephone number:	0151 226 1117
Fax number:	0151 256 0848
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev M Coleman
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Broad Square Primary School opened in 2002 as a new school in purpose built premises following amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools and the demolition of the old buildings on its site. It is situated in the Norris Green area of Liverpool. The school is of average size. Currently 323 boys and girls aged 3 to 11 are on roll. About 40 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above most other schools. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (28%) is well above what is usually found, and includes several with specific and moderate learning needs, speech and language, and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. None has a statement of special educational need, which is below national figures. Several pupils are from minority ethnic groups, including Asian and Chinese backgrounds, but very few are in the earliest stages of learning English as an additional language. Most children who attend the school are drawn from the Nursery class and live in the vicinity close to the school. The school's assessment information indicates that their attainment on entry is well below average. The school has been involved with 'The Greenhouse Project', a local initiative to develop the pupils' knowledge of their local environment and cultural heritage. It received a national 'Schools Achievement Award' in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19382	Laura Sparrow	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language
11072	Shirley Elomari	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
27869	Micah Cummings	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Geography History Physical education
7994	Pamela Weston	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Mathematics Music Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Broad Square Primary School is an effective school with many good features.** Overall, standards are in line with expected levels and pupils make good progress. Good teaching and a good curriculum motivate pupils to learn and achieve well. A key focus on improvement has helped to underpin the school's good climate for learning and support for success. Since opening in 2002, the school has achieved well, establishing a good sense of stability for pupils in relatively a short period of time. It provides good value for money and finances are well managed.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 attain expected levels in English, mathematics and science, which represents good and sometimes very good achievement.
- Good teaching helps all pupils to make rapid progress, learn well and achieve their best.
- Pupils' very good relationships and personal development make a powerful contribution to their individual achievements.
- Good leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by key staff and governors, has given the school a clear direction and commitment to achieving success from its earliest days.
- A wide range of innovative and purposeful curricular opportunities cater for the needs, aptitudes and interests of the pupils.
- Planning for pupils' systematic progress over time is in need of updating in some areas and subject leaders are not all sufficiently involved in the process of leading improvements.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) and literacy are not being used widely enough to support other subjects.

### STANDARDS

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	C
mathematics	N/A	N/A	E	C
science	N/A	N/A	E	C

*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 are achieving well** and they make at least good progress through the school, with some making very good progress. Although their attainment on entry to school is well below average, most children make rapid progress but do not quite achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. In the 2003 national tests, standards at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics, compared to all schools nationally. However, when compared to similar schools, they were well above average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. In the 2003 national tests, standards at the end of Y6 compared to all schools nationally were well below average in English, mathematics and science, but average when compared to similar schools. Recent unpublished information indicates that further improvements have been made this year. Standards achieved by the end of Years 2 and 6 during the inspection are broadly average in all subjects and the agreed syllabus in religious education. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and most achieve well and meet their targets.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils read simple texts with fluency, write short, descriptive accounts and solve simple mathematical problems. Speaking and listening skills are being strongly developed across

the school and this enhances older pupils' skills in writing more imaginatively. Most are developing increasing confidence in using mathematics and they understand that there are different ways to solve problems. In science, pupils' knowledge and understanding is being extended, but in Year 2, their skills in measuring are not as strong. By the end of Year 6, their skills in applying what they have learned to test changing conditions and in displaying information are below average. Most pupils are confident in using ICT and there is good provision for learning in the computer suite. However, they are not often expected to use their ICT skills in daily lessons to write, research and handle data. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good**, which is evident in positive personal qualities, attitudes to learning and behaviour. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school, show appreciation of the school community and value what the school provides for them. Relationships are very good and there is a respect for learning. Attendance is satisfactory and there has only been a single exclusion.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education, including teaching and learning, and the curriculum are good.** Throughout the school, teaching is good, and is sometimes very good. A particular strength is the way that teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour and pace lessons well. Their enthusiasm and good use of resources motivate pupils to work productively and to achieve well. Pupils are taught to collaborate and work well independently. Good use of assessment and target setting contributes to helping standards to be raised in English and mathematics. The curriculum is well planned for the shorter term and is enriched by visits to places of interest and links to local history, the environment and arts. However, revision of medium term planning for some subjects, and the implementation of the school's policy of teaching some subjects together are not consistent through the school. A breakfast club, good after school provision and many clubs, including dance and sports, enhance learning. Visits to museums and residential trips enliven study. Pupils are given many good opportunities to develop their independence, and they are cared for very well. Effective provision for pupils whose first language is not English and for those with SEN promotes equality of opportunity and enables all pupils to feel fully included in the life of the school. Partnerships with parents and other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management are good.** The vision of the headteacher, key staff and governors, with the support of parents and pupils, has enabled the successful establishment of the new school in its very good premises. The staff and governors have formed an effective team and are determined that the school should continue to improve. The governors are well led by a committed chair and they ensure all statutory requirements are met, except for some omissions in the information provided in reports to parents. Through playing an active role evaluating performance and involvement in activities, governors have a good picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subject leaders have the skills and suitable plans in place to lead improvements in their areas. However, some have not had enough time to see that developments, particularly longer term planning, are agreed and implemented across the school.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Almost all parents have very positive views of the school and recognise the good standards of care provided, and pupils' good achievements. Pupils are very well involved in the life of their school. Most understand that their views are taken into consideration when changes are planned and know their views are taken seriously.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Support subject co-ordinators' roles in leading further improvements. As included in the school development plan, develop the links between subjects and see that these are detailed in long and medium term curriculum plans.
- Extend the use of literacy and ICT across the curriculum.

### **And to meet statutory requirements:**

- Improve the information provided in reports to parents.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in the infant and junior classes achieve well and make good, and sometimes very good progress. Considering the well below average attainment of pupils on entry to the school, the achievement of the pupils is good and sometimes very good.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Foundation Stage do not quite meet the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception.
- In lessons seen during the inspection, pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain broadly average standards. Most achieve well and sometimes very well in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well because of good levels of support.

#### **Commentary**

1. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with well below average attainment for their age. All of them, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and those whose first language is not English (EAL), achieve well and make good, and in some cases, very good progress. Children achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development, and well in all the other areas of learning because of the good quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage. However, by the end of Reception, most are unlikely to achieve the goals they are expected to reach.

2. In national tests taken at the end of Year 2 in 2003, standards in reading and writing were well above average, and in mathematics, above average in comparison to similar schools. Compared to all schools nationally, they were below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. However, in lessons seen during the inspection, standards were broadly average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In Years 1 and 2, pupils read simple texts fluently and with expression, and talk enthusiastically about stories and characters. Many write short, descriptive accounts of their experiences and observations, and use their mathematical skills for practical work.

3. In national tests taken by the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science were average in comparison to similar schools. Compared to all schools nationally, they were well below average. In lessons seen during the inspection, standards were broadly average in English, mathematics and science, which represents good, and for some pupils, very good achievement.

4. Currently standards in English and mathematics are improving at the end of Years 2 and 6 because of the emphasis that the school places on the structured approach it takes to literacy and numeracy. A high value is placed on reading, and there are good links established between home and school to ensure that pupils are listened to regularly. Pupils' confidence is underpinned by the development of speaking and listening skills and encouragement from teachers to share their views. As this develops across the school it enhances pupils' skills in reading and writing more imaginatively. Most pupils are developing increasing confidence in using and applying mathematics, and understand that there is more than one way to solve problems. Recent unpublished test results indicate that attainment has improved this year at the end of Years 2 and 6.

5. In science, lessons are interesting, well planned, and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding well so that they achieve expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils have a secure understanding of how to observe and record, but their skills in planning fair tests and measuring in Year 2 are less sound. Junior pupils' experience of interpreting evidence and thinking about the outcomes of changing variables, particularly in Year 6, are not as strongly developed as other areas. Their skills in applying what they have learned in order to re-test outcomes of changing conditions, and interpreting and displaying information, are weak

6. In information and communication technology (ICT), good provision and teachers' enthusiasm encourage pupils to achieve well so that standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.

7. Standards in religious education are satisfactory and meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus. In all other subjects, standards are broadly in line with expected levels in Years 2 and 6, except for art, geography and music, where it was not possible to make a judgement because few lessons were seen.

8. The school's assessment, target setting and tracking procedures give teachers a good picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in literacy and numeracy. Set against their achievements upon starting school, minority ethnic pupils, and those with EAL and SEN are achieving well because of the good support provided for their needs. In lessons, no differences were seen in the achievement of girls and boys.

9. A few gifted and talented pupils attend local schools for enrichment activities. They have individual challenges set for them in some lessons, for instance English, but not others, though they may be capable of achieving more. Although they are adequately catered for overall, work set in some subjects is not distinct from that for higher attaining groups.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3 (N/A)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (N/A)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.3 (N/A)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (N/A)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.4 (N/A)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.2 (N/A)	28.6 (28.3)

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

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

10. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and are enthusiastic about the lessons and other activities provided for them. Their behaviour is good overall; at playtimes and lunchtimes it is usually very good. The school's calm and positive ethos fosters consideration for others and pupils' personal development is very good as a consequence. Pupils develop very good relationships with one another and with staff. Bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour are rare. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. Their spiritual development is satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is very good and there is a strong sense of community in the school.
- Pupils form very good relationships with others. They take very good care of one another so that there is very little bullying.
- The school sets very high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are keen to learn and behave well in lessons.

## **Commentary**

11. In the Foundation Stage, children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. From the first days of school, staff teach children the rules and responsibilities which promote their understanding of moral and social issues that affect their life. From a low starting point, most are likely to achieve just below the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year.

12. Infant and junior pupils' personal development is very good; they have a very good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are involved in setting the rules for their class and the school council decided on the criteria for giving out 'smiley and sad faces'. This means that pupils understand the rules and learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility so that they gain a very good understanding of living in a community. Those who carry out jobs appreciate that they are important and help the school to run smoothly. Older pupils are encouraged to take care of the younger ones, which helps to create the strong sense of community. Pupils' cultural development is very good. They have a very good range of opportunities to learn about their own and others' cultures through events such as the recent African drumming workshop and involvement in the city's 'Greenhouse'. This project focused on the cultural traditions of Liverpool and gave pupils the chance to explore their own diverse backgrounds. Pupils learn to empathise with others and show respect for their feelings. They are very caring of one another.

13. Pupils form very good relationships with one another and with staff, helped by the very good role models provided by teachers and other adults. The school fosters pupils' self esteem very well through praise and rewards as well as by celebrating achievements. A particular feature of the school is the respect shown by adults to pupils. This encourages pupils to participate confidently in lessons and activities because they know that they are valued. Pupils learn from the very good example set by staff to show respect to others within the school community. The strong sense of community and the very good quality of the relationships lead to a low incidence of bullying and other forms of harassment. It also ensures that it is not tolerated when it does occur. The 'pupil advocates' make a very significant contribution to sorting out problems when friendships are strained.

14. Pupils are positive about school and their learning. They usually behave well in lessons because they are interested in the tasks and topics. Behaviour in some lessons was very good because pupils' interest was fully engaged by the activities. Pupils almost always concentrate well and try hard to do their best. However, occasionally behaviour was unsatisfactory because a small number of pupils shouted out or did not concentrate well and so disturbed others. At breaks and lunchtimes, behaviour is usually very good. The playground has separate areas for different activities so that pupils wishing to be quiet are not disturbed by football and other noisy games. Lunchtime supervision is very good and the supervisors often lead, or join in with, pupils' games. The school is committed to keeping children in school and uses a wide range of strategies, tailored to the needs of the individual, to achieve this. As a result, there has only been one exclusion since the school opened.

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	260	1	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

15. Attendance is below that typically found nationally, but above the average for primary schools locally. The level of unauthorised absence is broadly similar to that found in primary schools nationally. The school makes all parents aware of the importance of regular, prompt attendance and most parents inform the school of the reason for any absence promptly. All unexplained absences are followed up on the first day. The good procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance have led to a significant rise in attendance in the current year. Most pupils are punctual in the morning.

#### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	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**

16. The quality of education provided by the school is good. The teaching is good throughout and this leads pupils to having positive attitudes and behaving and achieving well.

### **Teaching and learning**

17. The quality of teaching is good though the school. Very good teaching in the Nursery enables children to have a very positive start in learning. Teaching and learning in English, mathematics and history are good. The quality of teaching is consistently good for pupils in the Foundation Stage and in infant and junior classes. Very good teaching was seen in Years 3, 4 and 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' high expectations are reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning
- Their good use of time and resources helps pupils to learn and achieve well.
- Pupils collaborate well and work well independently.
- Assessment and target setting have a positive impact on standards in English and mathematics.

18. Planning and assessment for the Foundation Stage is of very good quality and the teaching motivates children to settle easily and to achieve well.

19. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing personal and social skills. Their good relationships with pupils encourage confidence in speaking and listening and a willingness to learn. A focus on the key skills of literacy and numeracy underpin pupils' progress and achievement well.

20. Teachers' present subjects with energy, which is seen in their enthusiasm during lessons. Most lessons proceed at a fast pace and resources are used well. Good attention is given to extending pupils' knowledge, for example, when pupils are taught to link decimals, fractions and percentages in Year 6. Learning intentions are clearly identified to meet the needs of all pupils and are used as a focus for assessment. As these are shared with pupils, the criteria by which their learning will be evaluated are fully understood. Teachers use questions skilfully, but they do not always provide enough time for pupils to develop their ideas or to explain their thinking in sufficient depth. Some good examples of discussion were seen in Year 4 with the use of 'talking partners', and when pupils considered various ways to separate mixtures. Support assistants aid progress well, particularly for pupils with SEN. However, in many lessons, a few of the most able pupils are not challenged separately from groups with higher attainment.

21. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils to carry out their work with care; good levels of challenge encourage both pupils' interest and excitement in lessons. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work collaboratively and to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 worked energetically to devise a show that they performed with puppets they had just designed and made. Displays in the classroom support pupils in working independently, with a focus on vocabulary and learning intentions. However, some whole class sessions are long and too few strategies are applied to promote active learning. Pupils are expected to spend too much time listening without sufficient stimulation to engage, debate or deepen their understanding.

22. Good use of assessment and target setting is helping the school to raise standards in English and mathematics. Teachers' careful analysis of statutory and other tests is strengthening their picture of where progress has been made and where it is still needed. Learning targets are identified for groups, reviewed regularly and shared with pupils and parents. Although marking frequently supports pupils in knowing what they must do to improve and in evaluating progress towards their targets, there is some inconsistency in its use across the school.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 54 lessons**

<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
0	5 (9%)	25 (46%)	24 (44%)	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.*

#### **The curriculum**

23. The curriculum is **good** overall and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It is enriched well through a good range of visits, visitors and after school activities. The breadth of opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Accommodation is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weakness**

- Purposeful learning experiences capture pupils' interests and motivate them to learn well.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good. The school values each individual and makes good arrangements to promote equal opportunities in all areas of school life.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Many opportunities for learning are planned outside the school day.
- Revision of medium term planning for some subjects, identification of links between different subjects, and an agreed method for teaching a few subjects together are as yet incomplete.

## **Commentary**

24. The curriculum for all pupils is good and provides a balanced programme of activities for all of them. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the curriculum provides a wide range of planned and structured activities which engage children's interests well and give the youngest children, especially those in the Nursery, a good start to school across all the areas of learning.

25. The national strategies for numeracy and literacy have been well promoted and improvements made have contributed to standards being raised. These strategies have been adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with SEN and EAL. While the school development plan includes targets for subject leaders to review the national schemes of work in order to establish an agreed long-term curriculum plan, there has not yet been time for them to carry out and complete these activities. In the relatively short time that the school has been open, reviews have been undertaken and changes to planning introduced in some subjects but not others, for example, history and geography. The school has plans for subject leaders to identify the links between all subjects and how they should be taught together. More detailed planning of the use of literacy and ICT to support pupils' learning across different subjects is also yet to be developed.

26. Personal, health and social education is good. Drugs and health education policies are in place and lessons help to develop citizenship and care of the environment. Older pupils act as 'advocates' for younger pupils in the playground, providing support for all pupils.

27. The curriculum is enriched by many wide and varied activities. Pupils are involved in community projects, which also enhance their education, for example, the 'Greenhouse Project', where pupils research their family tree and the cultural development of Liverpool. Multicultural links are provided through the many visitors into school including a Sikh storyteller and an African dance company. Pupils are engaged in a range of educational visits which make their learning more meaningful, such as residential visits where they learn to live together and share. There is a good range of before and after school clubs for pupils, for example, the breakfast club, which provides well-organised activities. During the inspection the dance club was particularly well attended. Currently pupils do not take part in competitive sports with other schools, but the local football clubs provide coaching in skills. French has been successfully introduced in Years 3 and 4.

28. Provision for SEN is good and the school is committed to ensuring all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Pupils with SEN have detailed individual education plans, which provide helpful guidance for staff. There are a good number of support staff that are all well informed and efficiently deployed. These staff make a significant contribution to learning in all age groups. The school has a very well equipped ICT suite and good resources which are used well to develop the pupils' ICT skills. The newly built accommodation is very good, with very attractive play and games areas that add to the welcoming atmosphere of the school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

29. The school aims 'to provide a safe, secure environment where the care and well being of the children is of prime importance' and is very successful in doing so. This area is a major strength of the school's work. It provides a very high level of care for all its pupils. All pupils benefit from a very trusting relationship with at least one teacher or other adult. Pupils receive advice, guidance and support of a very high quality throughout their time in school. There are good arrangements for admitting children to the Reception class. Pupils' involvement in the life of their school is very good. They are consulted on a wide range of issues and know their views matter.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' welfare has a very high priority in the school. Pupils work in a healthy and safe environment and are very well cared for.
- Support, advice and guidance of a very high standard are readily available to all pupils because teachers monitor their learning and development very well.
- Pupils form very trusting relationships with adults and are confident that there is always an adult to turn to in time of need.
- Pupils are very well involved in the life of their school; their views are taken into consideration when changes are planned and pupils know their views are taken seriously.

30. The school is deeply committed to the care and well being of its pupils. There are very good arrangements to ensure the pupils' health, safety and well being. Child protection procedures comply with requirements. First aid is very well organised and most staff have received first aid training. Teachers and other staff pay very good attention to health and safety, both in lessons and around the school. The school has trained a large number of pupils as 'advocates' who help to sort out squabbles and address bullying. They are very ably supported by a teaching assistant and make a significant contribution to maintaining the friendly nature of the school community.

31. The school provides very good support advice and guidance to all its pupils. Teachers monitor pupils' academic and personal development very well. Pupils have targets to aim for which they understand and appreciate that teachers help them to improve their work. Teachers and support staff provide very clear advice and support in lessons so that pupils know what they have to do. Those with SEN benefit from individual education plans that support their learning well. Throughout the school, pupils are consistently helped to develop their confidence and self-esteem so that they learn well and are willing to contribute to the school community.

32. Pupils feel safe and happy in school because they know that their concerns are taken seriously. There are high levels of trust between staff and pupils, so pupils know that there is always a trusted adult to turn to in times of need. Teachers use their very good knowledge of each individual pupil effectively when providing support and guidance on personal issues. The school provides a very good programme of personal, health, social and citizenship education (PHSCE) that gives pupils an opportunity to talk about issues that affect their lives. 'Circle time'<sup>1</sup> is also used very effectively to address any current issues that are causing pupils' concern.

33. The school involves pupils very effectively in the life and development of their school. The school council meets regularly and its work has a high priority. For example, the council was actively involved in producing the behaviour policy and wrote a section of it. Each week, school councillors focus on one aspect of behaviour and present an award to those who set a good example. Older pupils are expected to be good role models for younger children and most take a pride in doing so. The school has established a very good system of pupil advocates and listens carefully to their views when incidences of unacceptable behaviour occur. Pupils are proud of their school.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

34. The school has developed a good partnership with parents and other schools. It has satisfactory links with the local community. Parents are very well informed about school life and routines. Reports are of a satisfactory quality overall but the school does not report on personal, health, social and citizenship education (PHSCE), which is a weakness. The opportunities parents have to discuss their child with teachers both formally and informally are good.

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<sup>1</sup> Circle time is a planned activity where pupils learn to share their personal feelings with each other and adults.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents support the school well and are very well informed about its daily life and routines.
- Links with other schools are good and have a positive impact on the curriculum.
- The school omits PHSCE and other information in its annual reports to parents.

## **Commentary**

35. The school has worked hard to establish a good partnership with parents that is continuing to develop. Parents are supportive of the school. They value its work and raised no significant concerns with inspectors. The school provides all parents with a wide range of useful information. The prospectus is well presented and informs parents fully about all aspects of the school's life and work. Parents receive a guide to the behaviour policy and are kept well informed about the curriculum. They are given appropriate guidance on how to help their child at home, especially with reading, spelling and number work. Parents are informed about their child's targets in English, mathematics and science. Those parents whose children have SEN are well involved and informed so that they understand what help their child needs. However, the first annual report of the governing body to parents, produced within a month of the establishment of a permanent governing body, contains a number of significant omissions. In particular, it fails to provide information about the policy for SEN and the arrangements made for the admission of disabled pupils.

36. Parents like the annual reports they receive and feel well informed by them. However, although the comments in English, mathematics and science are often detailed, those for other subjects are limited and do not tell parents what progress their child has made. All reports demonstrate the very good knowledge teachers have of individual pupils. The school does not report on PHSCE, which has a high profile in the school, and this is a weakness.

37. Partnerships with other schools are good. The school ensures that pupils transfer smoothly to secondary education by regular liaison with the high schools. During the inspection, many Year 6 pupils attended an induction day at their new schools. With the support of teachers from the high school the school provides French and drama lessons. The partnership is used well to enhance the learning experiences for pupils and their personal development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

38. The quality of leadership and management are good. The vision of the headteacher, key staff and governors, with the support of parents and pupils, has underpinned the successful establishment of the new school in its purpose built premises. Good leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff enable efficient transition of policies and decisions into effective practices, which contribute to the raising of standards. Governance is good and contributes effectively to the school's development.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear vision for continued development of the school.
- There are good systems in place for school self-evaluation and performance management.
- The governing body has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Subject leaders do not have enough time to carry out their work.
- Information in reports to parents is incomplete and does not meet statutory requirements.

## **Commentary**

39. The governance of the school is good. The majority of governors are actively involved in its life and are helping to shape the direction in which the school is developing. The chair of governors



regularly visits in order to keep a check on developments and is supportive of the headteacher and staff. Other governors frequently visit in their monitoring role and they also support the school through involvement in activities. Although many are new to their role, they are developing a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The positive ethos of the school is the result of the good relationship between the governors, headteacher and staff. The governors see that all statutory requirements are met, except for some omissions in information to parents in their annual report and in reports on pupils' progress.

40. The quality of leadership and management by the headteacher is good. She has been instrumental in instilling a sense of partnership amongst all the staff and in creating a successful whole school team. She leads and manages the school effectively and provides a clear direction for developments. Along with key staff, she has put in place a hard working team in order to develop a school community of which pupils are happy and proud to be a part.

41. The commitment of the headteacher and key staff to raising standards has well motivated others in their determination to raise standards and for pupils to achieve success. A training and development programme, with good levels of expertise provided by the local education authority, has supported good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. A key focus on 'improvement for all' has helped to underpin the school's climate for learning and support for success. The school has achieved a great deal in a relatively short period of time.

42. Subject leadership and management are good in most areas. In English, mathematics and science, subject leaders have taken a role in the analysis of performance data and the setting of targets. Others have been given the opportunity to develop their subject areas and are reviewing the effectiveness of long-term planning. However, few monitor lessons regularly and most have limited knowledge of teaching and learning in their subjects. Many do not have enough time to carry out the work needed to implement improvements in their areas or to complete their tasks.

43. The school has in place good systems for performance management, which are used well in order to support initiatives to bring about improvements in pupils' progress. All staff contribute and so understand the school development plan. Financial management of the school is good and the governing body efficiently monitors spending. A detailed school development plan addresses areas for priority and enables improvements to be effectively planned and implemented, with outcomes for success clearly identified. Although income, expenditure and monies retained in the budget are high, these are intended to reduce the impact of staffing costs and falling numbers over a three-year period, following the amalgamation. There are good routines that enable the headteacher and governors to monitor the deployment of resources. Best value principles are used effectively, for example, to evaluate improvements in the quality of teaching and standards achieved. Day-to-day financial management and administration are also good and administrative staff provide good support to teachers and pupils. Taking into account the use of available resources, the progress achieved by pupils, and the income that is received, the school provides good value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	957,210
Total expenditure	923,043
Expenditure per pupil	3,234

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	33,990
Balance carried forward to the next	55,000

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

44. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. It provides children with a stimulating and productive start to life. The attainment of the majority of children on entry is well below average. A major strength of the provision is the way in which teachers and assistants work together as a highly effective team. Very positive relationships give children security and confidence, enabling them to work enthusiastically and develop high self-esteem. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and leads to good achievement. Strong leadership and management result in highly effective organisation in the Foundation Stage. Detailed planning for adults who are teaching, supervising or assessing children's activities ensures that children's needs are known, understood and well met. Assessment is used very well when planning the next stage in a child's learning. A good ratio of adults to children benefits Nursery children because they have many opportunities to talk one-to-one and in small groups. An occasional lack of teaching support assistants in Reception means that children do not experience the same quality of small group interaction with adults enjoyed by those in the Nursery. Children with SEN are identified at a very early stage so that their work is targeted from the outset of schooling. Children with EAL are well supported by staff and also achieve as well as the others.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A warm secure atmosphere is generated in which children feel valued and enjoy coming to school.
- Very good relationships create a highly effective climate for learning that fosters children's moral, social and emotional development very well.
- Daily routines incorporate high expectations for behaviour. Children respond well, although a small number of Reception children whose needs are high can disrupt lessons.

#### **Commentary**

45. This area of learning has a suitably high profile in the Nursery and Reception classes. The adults are very effective in nurturing pupils' personal and social skills and generate a warm, secure atmosphere. They enjoy very good relationships with the children and make them feel valued. There is an air of peaceful harmony at all times, in particular in the Nursery. As a result, children gain in confidence and settle happily into school. Classroom routines are quickly and securely established. They provide very good opportunities for children to develop independence and show responsibility in simple matters of routine. Interesting activities lead to very good work habits because they are designed to sustain children's concentration. Children are well motivated and cooperate sensibly when sharing equipment. Good links with parents before and during the early days in school, along with the adults' caring provision, support children's development well. Most are likely to achieve just below the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year. As this is a key area for focus on entry to Nursery, this represents very good achievement. Teaching and learning is good overall.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective teaching of reading and the wide range of activities on offer result in good achievement for most children.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to express themselves.
- Writing skills are developed systematically.

### **Commentary**

46. Achievement is very good in Nursery and good overall because of teachers' thoughtful questioning, sensitive listening, and the many varied opportunities that children have to talk, listen and read. Speaking and listening skills are taught well and reinforced through a wide range of other activities. Children express their opinions confidently, for example, when Nursery children are playing in the home corner and deciding what shopping is needed. Reading and writing skills develop well. Nursery children are particularly well supported by a very well informed parent who engages the children fully when reading with them. Most behave as readers, knowing that print carries meaning, and use picture cues to tell the story. A few children are able to identify the words 'big' and 'cat'. Reception children continue the good start made and by the end of the year many are achieving the standards expected for their age. Informal opportunities to promote writing skills are incorporated throughout the many activities and many children can write their names independently. In the Reception class, emphasis is placed on the recognition of letter sounds and blending and looking for patterns within words and rhymes. Most children are beginning to read simple texts and those with higher attainment achieve very well. Practical activities provide very good opportunities for the development of writing so children develop very good control of the pencil. By the end of the year some are able to write their own account of a visit to Chester Zoo. Although most children are likely to achieve just below the goals they are expected to reach in writing by the end of Reception, a good number are likely to achieve them, especially in reading. Teaching and learning is good overall.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers grasp opportunities in all activities to promote children's mathematical understanding.
- Lively mental arithmetic warm-up games make learning fun.
- Learning is based on practical activities linked to mathematics.

### **Commentary**

47. The overall good quality teaching of practical activities, including counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns and relationships, and working with shape, space and measures, makes a significant contribution to children's achievement. In the Nursery and Reception classes, adults support children's learning and make it fun. Staff introduce lively mental warm-up games where children repeat jingles and count numbers. Very good adult support helps children in the Nursery to develop confidence in mathematical activities. For example, when planning a picnic, the children are helped to count the exact number of drinks, tangerines and ice pops needed. When lining the items up they are able to say which line is longest or the shortest. Most count to 16 and add one more. Very effective teaching and support continues in the Reception class with activities that lead up to simple addition and subtraction problems using numbers up to 10. A good number of children count confidently and order numbers to 20 and above. The most capable children completing simple problems with money say how much more than 40 pence they will need to make a pound. Most

children are on course to achieve just below the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year. Given their attainment on entry, this represents good achievement as a result of the overall good teaching.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff plan a good range of interesting activities to stimulate children's curiosity and broaden their experiences.
- Activities are well organised to enable all children to take part in the stimulating curriculum.
- Opportunities to learn about cultural diversity feature highly in the planning.
- Children are introduced to ICT at an early stage and use computers regularly.

### **Commentary**

48. Children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn about the world. Good questioning and sensitive listening enable children to focus on key elements of the lessons, to talk about their observations and to make sense of what they see. Visits and visitors, along with the good quality resources, support this area of learning well. Although children enter Nursery with very limited knowledge and understanding of the world, they make good progress. By the time they leave the Reception class most are not quite achieving the goals they are expected to reach, although some are meeting them. Investigations take part regularly, such as when Nursery children are encouraged to use a magnifying glass to observe changes and to be aware of the needs of plants, for example, green beans. Children learn about their own and other cultures and religions by celebrating many of the important festivals. Computers are used regularly. Staff provide well chosen ICT programs that reinforce the children's basic skills such as counting, matching, numbers and letters. A good number of Nursery and most Reception children use the mouse to open graphics and the tool to select the pictures confidently. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers inform parents of forthcoming activities, which help them to support their children well. A very good example of this was when Nursery children were sending home postcards about their favourite places. Because parents had been asked to teach the children their address, the children were confident recounting their own, and one even knew the postcode.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

49. It was not possible to make an overall judgement because physical activities were not observed in Reception and only a short part of two lessons were observed in Nursery. Other evidence was gathered from observations during playtimes and outdoor play activities. Most children move confidently, with good control, balance and co-ordination. Most children move with increasing skill in a variety of ways, including hopping, jumping and running. They respond quickly to the teacher's directions and negotiate space successfully when moving around the playground. During a wet playtime, the children thoroughly enjoyed circle games in the school hall. When they sang and moved to the music of 'The Farmer Wants a Wife', the children showed good recall of the chosen order of the song. The children's good development in social skills is seen, for example, in their ability to line up sensibly, with most putting on their socks and trainers unaided. The very good playground facilities enable all children to practice their skills of climbing, running and exploring large apparatus. There is a wide variety of wheeled toys and equipment to develop their co-ordination skills. Most children's manipulative skills are very good as shown when they model clay, handle pencils and brushes and use small toys, tools and scissors safely. Teachers plan work to match the children's ability well and to extend their confidence and enjoyment.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided for children to express their ideas through a variety of materials, media and colour.
- Role-play areas encourage imaginative activities and language development.

50. In Nursery and Reception, artwork brightens the classroom. Children use paint, collage and modelling materials and express their creative ideas boldly. Activities are planned daily and are readily available as a choice activity. Nursery children are eager to enter into the role of 'the shopper' in the fruit stall, and this enhances their language development well, particularly when staff join in role-play and extend the activities. Nursery children sing simple songs from memory as they act out 'walking through the jungle'. Reception children join with Year 1 to experience good opportunities to take part in singing and playing percussion instruments. Most children are on course to achieve just below the goals expected for their age by the time that they leave Reception and this represents good achievement over time.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses.**

- The quality of teaching is good and as a result most pupils, including those with SEN, achieve well.
- Standards are improving.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills to other subjects.

### **Commentary**

51. Standards in English have risen during the past two years. In the 2003 national tests, standards in Year 6 were average compared with similar schools. In Year 2, standards in reading and writing were above average compared to similar schools. Standards seen during the inspection were similar to those found in most schools. Almost all pupils are achieving well. Those with SEN and the small numbers of EAL pupils also achieve well because they are given good levels of support and their work is matched carefully to their particular learning needs.

52. Standards in speaking and listening are improving. In most lessons pupils have many opportunities to respond to questions and are encouraged to express themselves, using full sentences and, wherever possible, a wide range of vocabulary.

53. Pupils enjoy reading. Most have a good understanding of the differences between fiction and non-fiction. Their improving speaking and listening skills enable many to talk about favourite authors and to explain why they find particular books interesting. During the inspection a group of Year 2 and 6 pupils read enthusiastically and spoke with excitement about the books and stories which they shared with others. Good support for reading is provided by teaching assistants, especially for pupils with SEN.

54. The quality of writing is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils write simple sentences and punctuate their work correctly using full stops and capital letters. The most capable pupils are beginning to use question and speech marks. However, their understanding and use of different styles of writing are less in evidence. Older pupils are provided with a wider range of tasks and the opportunity to write in different styles. More able pupils write particularly imaginative and interesting stories, which demonstrate their ability to write in a range of styles. Handwriting is satisfactory overall. Pupils in Year 2 write using print, and most form their letters correctly. By the end of Year 6, many pupils use a cursive style and present their work neatly. Although work is marked regularly, pupils are not always informed about how to improve or how they have progressed against targets that they have been set.

55. Teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons, most pupils are clear about their targets for learning, the level of challenge is high, and the pace of lessons is demanding. The use of resources in most lessons is good and support staff are deployed effectively and support pupils' learning well. Direct questioning of different pupils encourages them to respond by extending their use of thinking skills to solve problems. Lessons are planned effectively for different mixed aged classes. Opportunities are given for pupils to question each other in role, relate events from 'the hot seat', and they are encouraged to think carefully before drawing conclusions. For example, the use of 'talking partners' in Year 4 developed pupils' skills in identifying and answering the questions they thought were most important.

56. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has worked hard to improve standards in English through an intensive staff development programme, including good levels of external support from the local education authority and the development of the school's monitoring procedures. Good use of performance information and assessment procedures has helped the school to identify weaknesses in the subject, check progress, and to set targets for pupils.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

57. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is broadly satisfactory but there is room for further development, for example, in the application of pupils' skills in research. Pupils are provided with better opportunities to apply their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening in some lessons than others. Standards in writing are improving, but the progressive application of literacy skills across the curriculum, including the use ICT, is inconsistent across the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and expect them to work hard.
- Pupils with particular learning needs progress well because of the quality support they receive in lessons.
- There are good systems for tracking pupils' progress.
- The marking of pupils work gives information about how they can improve their work; however this is not consistent across all year groups.
- There are insufficient planned opportunities for the use of ICT in lessons.

### **Commentary**

58. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in mathematics are similar to those found in most schools. Achievement is good throughout the school for all groups of pupils. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They work closely with teachers, providing the

extra support that pupils with learning needs require to give them confidence when using mathematical skills. The mixed age class grouping of pupils by ability benefits all of them because the pace of work for each group is adjusted to meet their level of understanding.

59. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue the good start provided in Nursery and Reception, with most achieving levels expected for their age. As most pupils start Nursery with well below average standards in mathematical skills, this represents good achievement. In 2003, standards achieved in the national tests by the end of Year 6 were below average compared to all schools, and average compared to similar schools. On the basis of lessons seen during the inspection, most pupils are on target to achieve expected levels, with a good number working comfortably at higher levels. Previous years' test results have indicated that boys have performed better than girls, although no significant differences were noted during the inspection.

60. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good number skills and a few are working above the expected level for their age. Most are secure when adding and subtracting to 20, and have a good understanding of place value and how to write fractions. Pupils with lower attainment are very secure working within numbers to 10 and are developing good skills when asked to recognise patterns amongst these numbers.

61. By the end of Year 6, pupils with SEN and those with lower attainment are able to use appropriate number operations to solve problems. This is because of the good support provided to aid their reading and understanding of the problems set. More capable pupils solve problems by extracting and interpreting information presented in tables, graphs and charts.

62. The implementation of the national strategy is underpinning work across the whole curriculum. Pupils are being helped to realise that there is more than one way to reach an answer. The development of different methods of using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division is giving pupils the confidence to apply them to questions of increasing complexity. Many use calculators effectively to check their manual calculations.

63. The overall quality of teaching is good and this has a significant effect on pupils' learning. Teachers plan work carefully to promote the development of skills by building on what pupils know. Questions are used to help pupils to think logically through each stage of a given problem. In a lesson for eleven-year-olds, the teaching methods were imaginative and led to a very high level of interest from pupils. All pupils were engrossed in their work because stimulating and enthusiastic teaching, stemming from expert knowledge of the curriculum, provided constant challenge. There were very good relationships between the teacher and pupils. Teaching of younger pupils is planned to achieve the targets identified and because of this, helps them to make good progress. Support staff make a significant contribution to the learning, initially helping to keep pupils with SEN informed and attentive during the mental starters, then enabling pupils to participate fully in group activities. Pupils' work is often marked with written suggestions for improvement or the next stage in learning, but this is not consistent in every year group.

64. The subject is well led and the subject leader monitors it effectively. Good use of target setting and tracking is helping to raise standards. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' work are good and there is a clear overview of annual progress.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Pupils' numerical and mathematical skills are used well in other subjects, although there is no plan to ensure consistency in methods or the presentation of graphs and charts. There is frequent and good use of mathematical concepts to collect and record results and to reach conclusions about data. However, ICT is not yet used widely enough to support mathematics across the curriculum.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well and are interested in their learning.
- Investigational work is well embedded in lessons.
- There is insufficient emphasis on the skills of interpreting data and using measurement to establish patterns.
- A few of the most able pupils could achieve better.

### Commentary

66. It was not possible to observe any lessons in the infant classes, but discussions with pupils, sampling of their work and teachers' planning, and science displays in classrooms and around the school indicate that by the end of Year 2 they attain standards similar to those found in most schools. Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 make rapid progress in their knowledge and understanding of science and almost all, achieve well.

67. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils are familiar with the investigative process. A good range of first hand experiences about the natural world provide the basis for them to carry out observations and draw conclusions about what they have seen, for example, about the characteristics of ladybirds and worms. Most record their findings using a simple table. However, a few of the most capable pupils lack confidence in knowing how to carry out a fair test and applying their skills in measurement in order to confirm their ideas.

68. Standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to those found in most schools. Although many junior pupils have some gaps in their knowledge and understanding, these are being better addressed by teachers' use of assessment and a more systematic approach to implementing the national schemes of work. By the end of Year 6, most pupils' knowledge of different areas of the curriculum is more evenly developed, and the majority achieves well. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Almost all have a secure understanding of fair tests and carry out investigations, following instructions. However, their skills in considering evidence are not as well developed as those in carrying out fair tests.

69. Teaching in the junior classes is always at least satisfactory, and on occasion, very good. Lessons are well structured and learning intentions are shared with pupils. Teachers have good expectations for behaviour, lessons are well paced and pupils have adequate time for investigation. Resources are used well to stimulate pupils' interest and curiosity for finding answers to questions. When making periscopes, for example, handling mirrors at different angles helped to deepen Year 6 pupils' understanding of how light is bent and reflected. Generally, tasks meet the learning needs of broad groups and pupils with SEN and EAL are given additional help by support staff. However, a few of the most able pupils are not always individually challenged and could achieve more if they were given specific questions of their own to explore. Although teachers' subject expertise and confidence in questioning help pupils to learn well, some do not place enough emphasis on skills of interpreting data and using measurement to establish patterns. Pupils are not expected often enough to apply what they have learned from experiments as the basis for further enquiry or to examine the effect of altering variables.

70. The pupils enjoy science, investigate with enthusiasm and collaborate well in groups. They share ideas and resources well in their experiments. Many take care presenting their work in a range of formats, but not enough emphasis is placed on data handling, where little use is made of ICT.



71. The subject leadership is good. The subject leader evaluates the school's performance and plans actions to address the outcomes, which form the basis of a useful action plan. The revision of medium term planning and further development of detailed assessment criteria for tracking progress is underway. Lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' work have been observed and teachers provided with helpful feedback. Finance has been used well to extend the range and quality of resources.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory and sometimes good, and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers' and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject engenders positive attitudes to learning.
- Not enough use is made of ICT in lessons in the classroom and for work across subjects of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

72. Even the youngest pupils can log on and select appropriate folders and programs for use in the computer suite. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good level of keyboard skills. Most are able to paint pictures, select photos and write captions to insert in posters they produce following visits to Chester Zoo and the Blue Planet Aquarium. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn how to compose different styles of music, and control the movement of a 'turtle' to make it climb a 'rainbow staircase'. Year 6 pupils confidently use the Internet, photos and titles to enhance slide presentations. They learn about the digital video camera, for example, when they were filmed reading 'commercials' based on persuasive writing done for work in English. Almost all pupils collaborate well, providing their own advice and support for each other.

73. Most teachers' present lessons carefully and capture their pupils' interest from the start. Their expectations for behaviour are often high and pupils know what they need to achieve and respond enthusiastically. The lessons are well structured and pupils are reminded frequently of learning intentions. Good emphasis on the use of technical vocabulary and the rapid development of pupils' skills support learning well. Since teachers have received national training in the direct teaching of ICT, most show increasing expertise and confidence. Although pupils are willing to demonstrate, they are not often given the chance to share their work or to explain how they have gone about making decisions, for example, using the digital projector.

74. The curriculum is well planned to take account of work in different subjects for each year group for each term. A good feature is the selection of programs that support learning in ICT skills as well as aspects of subjects. All pupils are given a wide range of experience, including word-processing, graphics, and controlling devices. The subject is well managed. A useful system for assessing pupils' skills based on the learning objectives of the planned units of work has been introduced by the co-ordinator. The school's provision is good and there are plans for it to continue to be steadily extended. The ICT suite provides a high quality teaching area that is well used by classes, and with some regularity, by parents and the community. However, limited use is made of computers for learning and carrying out tasks in the classroom. The use of ICT for pupils to write, record findings, and carry out research in daily lessons is similar and does not currently assist progress, for example, in further developing skills in word processing or handling data. The school is still at an early stage of integrating the use of the interactive whiteboard and digital camera as a method for pupils to carry out and demonstrate their work.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. Where ICT is used for subject teaching, it enhances learning well, but in many lessons, it is not often used. There are some links to work in literacy and numeracy. For instance, Year 3 pupils were highly motivated when they practiced multiplication using a program they found on the Internet. Younger pupils used software for painting effects to accompany poems they composed on the computer, and to enliven titles for project files. Older pupils sequenced the flow of traffic lights, which was linked to their work on electricity for science.

## HUMANITIES

76. Only one lesson was seen in **geography** so that it is not possible for a judgement about provision to be made. However, evidence was gathered from discussion with the subject leader and samples of teacher's planning, pupils' work and displays around the school. On the basis of work seen, there is every indication that standards are similar to those found in most schools. All of pupils have an opportunity to learn about the world around them and to study the local area. The work undertaken on the 'Greenhouse Project' is a good example of cross-curricular links between geography and other areas. The subject leader has provided advice about medium term planning based on the national scheme of work. However, teachers have not received a high level of guidance as it has not been seen as a current priority, but it is highlighted for development next year. Links to other subjects and long term planning have not yet been reviewed.

### History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- History makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The scheme of work does not have clearly defined expectations of what different groups of pupils should achieve.
- Assessment is not used effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

### Commentary

77. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found in most schools. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching in some lessons and the opportunity for them to develop their knowledge through first hand experience. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about famous people in the past and can make comparisons between the past and the present. In a Year 2 history lesson, pupils were learning about the life of Florence Nightingale. Many were able to identify reasons for her actions and understood how her work has made a significant contribution to the improvement of nursing today. A majority could explain how times have changed and knew that there are significant differences between hospitals now and in the past. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an understanding of the social issues in Victorian Britain, and the major developments and inventions that changed the lives of people during the period. Older pupils learn about how the Greek and Egyptian civilisations traded with the rest of the world and their impact on other civilisations. Through their study of different periods of time, they develop an understanding of chronology, cause and effect, and events. Pupils often are encouraged to work independently and to present their findings in a variety of ways. A good example of this was seen in the school library, where groups of Year 6 pupils worked independently to produce work on Britain since 1930.

78. Work in history contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when, for example, they consider the working conditions for children in Victorian times, beliefs in the divine rule of Egyptian pharaohs, and the culture of the Greeks.

79. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and the knowledge they acquire. Teachers' good subject knowledge contributes well to building up the pupils' understanding. All pupils are achieving well and those with particular learning needs are supported effectively. However, ICT is not used often enough to develop pupils' skills in carrying out research.

80. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is a scheme of work in place, but the subject leader does not have enough time to monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' progress or to develop assessment. Currently the scheme of work does not assist teachers in having clear expectations of what different groups of pupils should achieve. Assessment is not yet being used effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning about Christianity and other world faiths.
- There are good links between the curriculum for religious education and pupils' learning in PHSCE, which strengthens pupils' personal development and understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

81. Only two lessons were seen in religious education, one in Year 6 and one in Year 5.

82. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those expected for pupils of this age by the local agreed syllabus for the subject. The pupils' achievement is good. Most develop a good knowledge of a range of world faiths, which is enhanced by visits to local places of worship, such as the local church and a mosque, and by visitors to school. Many have a sound knowledge of stories, special artefacts and symbols of Christianity and other faiths and develop good attitudes to learning. The pupils develop respect for those of other faiths than their own and are genuinely interested in their beliefs and traditions. They gain a sound understanding of the links and the differences between Christianity and other faiths. When learning, for example, about Guru Nanak the founder of Sikhism, they begin to understand his belief in the need for tolerance towards each other and strengthen their own personal development as a result.

83. Pupils enter Year 1 with awareness that all faiths have expectations about how people will behave towards each other and that they celebrate special events together. The scheme of work builds on this. Evidence based on pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that by the end of Year 2, most pupils make good progress in their knowledge of the Christianity and other faiths, for example, the celebration of Divali. They understand what it means to belong, and the importance of family life in other faith groups. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a secure understanding of Christianity and other world faiths through, for example, a study of Buddhism. They study the origins of religions, the key religious leaders, and consider the similarities between religions. They compare the celebration of the birth of Christ and that of Guru Nanak.

84. Lessons are well planned, fast paced and involve a range of strategies to deepen pupils' understanding. In Year 5, the importance of regular worship by Muslims was emphasised well. The pupils' interest was engaged by the telling a story of a boy and the effect of the power of prayer upon him. Strong skills in story telling enabled a good level of detail about Muslim beliefs to be explored. Good opportunities were provided for the pupils to reflect on the meaning of prayer. As a result, the pupils understood the importance of prayer to every religion. Work in pupils' books is presented with thought and care. The subject contributes well to the pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development. For example, pupils in Year 5 designed menus for a Sikh wedding and discussed the food to be served for the celebration meal, gaining an insight into the beliefs and rituals.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

## Art and design

85. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design** during the inspection. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision, but evidence was collected from pupils' work, displays in the classroom and teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils. On the basis of work seen, standards are similar to those found in most schools at the end of Years 2 and 6.

86. The school provides a wide and rich curriculum. Work in art and design is linked to different subjects and themes for each half term. Pupils' skills in observation are developed through experience of different types of media. All through the school, pupils are expected to sketch, paint, and use a range of materials to make models of what they are studying. A good sense of appreciation of art and design contributes very strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, delicate Coptic jars, colourful animals and attractively patterned tiles that the oldest pupils made from clay, provide very good support for their cultural understanding.

All pupils explore a range of techniques and activities, which are seen in artistic displays around the school. Work on the local 'Greenhouse Project' and visits to museums enhance pupils' knowledge of local and famous artists and styles of art. Pupils in Year 1 produce weavings using natural colours. Years 3 and 4 create paintings in an Aboriginal style; Year 5 pupils learn about William Morris' 'Willow Pattern' plates.

87. The subject leader brings expertise to the role and has influenced improving standards. Clubs enable pupils to experience an interesting range of activities. Resources for teaching and learning are good. Computer programs are used well to support learning.

## Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found in most schools.
- There is a good booklet for pupils' planning, designing and evaluating work.
- The subject leader has not had a chance to check on standards of teaching and learning

## Commentary

88. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly average. The achievement of junior pupils reflects previous gaps in provision that are now being addressed. Many pupils have positive attitudes to learning and apply themselves with enthusiasm. Most are able to work independently and collaborate well.

89. By the end of Years 2 and 6, a majority of pupils can describe how they carried out their designs and understand the purpose of their activity. Year 2 pupils evaluated the puppets they designed and made and prepared a show for the puppet theatre in order to determine if they were strong enough to use. Design booklets, in which their sketches and diagrams were clearly labelled and details of resources needed, helped them to produce their work. Junior pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their work and are able to make modifications for improvements to their designs, for instance, for structures in Year 6. Although pupils are taught to use a range of tools and equipment, their practical skills in making models are less well developed than those of planning and evaluating. Pupils in Year 5 measured accurately, but found cutting card challenging when they made frames to support a wrack and pinion conveyor belt for a toy. Pupils in Year 6 followed instructions to make a kaleidoscope, but progress was slowed by their lack of practical experience in measuring, cutting and joining materials. Their finishing skills and confidence in using tools are not strongly developed.

90. Teaching is satisfactory. The curriculum is organised around class projects for each half term that are linked to the national scheme of work. Information and communication technology is being well used to support learning through programs that involve modelling and controlling devices. The subject leader has introduced good planning booklets to support pupils' skills in designing, making and evaluating their work. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and there is an action plan to develop areas where pupils miss out experiences. Some useful support for planning has been given and a portfolio of examples of work at each level is being established. However, assessment of pupils' skills and the monitoring of the long term planning are at an early stage. Resources are sufficient and pupils are aware of safety issues when using tools.

## **Music**

91. No lessons were seen in **music**, but pupils were heard singing in assemblies and the Foundation Stage, where they sang tunefully and enjoyed the music played. Through listening to many different sources of music, pupils develop an appreciation of a range of cultures. In assemblies and lessons, they gain knowledge and understanding of contrasting styles of music, different instruments and singing. Sessions in the music room enable them to gain experience of handling percussion instruments and simple composition; groups of pupils are learning instruments. Pupils perform on special occasions such as Christmas and Easter.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and enjoy gymnastics and dance.
- Teaching is good.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to extend their learning by developing new skills.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good.

## **Commentary**

92. Overall standards in physical education are similar to those found in most schools, and achievement is good. A majority of pupils show increasing understanding of what they need to do to improve their skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate good control of travelling, jumping and the use of space. Year 4 pupils carry out gymnastic activities involving jumping and running, and show refinement of their techniques.

93. The quality of teaching and learning are good. Pupils dress appropriately for physical education and are motivated well to achieve their best. The teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject and the quality of lesson planning is good. Most are confident to demonstrate what pupils are required to do, which often leads to a good standard of work. In gymnastics, pupils are taken through a sequence of work from warm up to cooling down. The pupils are given good encouragement to develop their skills and are often provided with guidance on how they can improve. Most teachers provide careful coaching to pupils about their work and this enables them to achieve well. Although teachers expect pupils to demonstrate there are too few opportunities for them to discuss their achievements in order to evaluate and suggest improvements.

94. The majority of pupils enjoy physical education and they work well collaboratively and independently. In lessons, their behaviour is generally good. All groups of pupils, regardless of gender, ability or social backgrounds work happily together.

95. The co-ordinator is new to the subject and has only recently taken on the role. She has suitable plans to develop the scheme of work so that all pupils improve their skills in all the areas of the physical education curriculum.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Provision for PSHCE is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Circle time is well used to develop pupils' understanding of their own and other's feelings.
- The school council and 'advocates' enable pupils to develop good awareness of the importance of social and personal attitudes for community life.

### **Commentary**

96. The school's arrangements for personal, social and health education, including drugs education, are good. The programme is taught through subjects, for example, understanding the impact of diet and health in science. Good attention is given to the dangers of drugs, and the need for exercise for a healthy life style. Residential visits to activity centres, and visitors such as the school nurse, contribute well. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to share their views, develop their skills in decision-making, and suggests ideas for improvements that it would like to see. The school council is also encouraged to take responsibility for others through its role in highlighting desirable behaviours each week and identifying those who show those qualities, for example, being kind to others. These are linked to assembly themes that stress pupils' importance in the school community. Circle time is used effectively throughout the school in order to encourage pupils to share their feelings, negotiate areas of possible conflict, and develop awareness of others. The 'advocate' role of personal support for others helps pupils to understand the importance of resolving conflicts as they arise. The quality of this provision enhances the school's promotion of pupils' high self-esteem, relationships and confidence, and underpins its commitment to achievement for all.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*