INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER AND ST PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Haresfinch, St Helens

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104810

Headteacher: Mr C Moss

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Bamber

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 October 2003

Inspection number: 257926

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	193
School address:	Derwent Road Haresfinch St Helens
Postcode:	WA11 9AT
Telephone number:	(01744) 678640
Fax number:	(01744) 678642
Appropriate authority: Name of chair of governors:	Governing body Rev. K O'Brien
Date of previous inspection:	18 May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter and St Paul Roman Catholic Primary School is located in an urban area, of average size and admits pupils from two local parishes. It has Investors in People Status, has been awarded a DfES Achievement Award (2000) and the care club has been successfully inspected by Ofsted. Pupils come from a cross-section of backgrounds and consistently enter the reception class with expected attainment. A broadly average proportion of the pupils has special educational needs. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low and there are no pupils who have any language other than English as their mother tongue. Few pupils join or leave the school at times other than the normal for leaving or transfer.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

	Members of the inspection team		Subject responsibilities
15064	P Bamber	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Geography
			History
			Physical education
1329	K Oliver	Lay inspector	
29263	F Clarke	Team inspector	Science
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
			English as an additional language
27895	M Skinner	Team inspector	English
			Information and communication technology
			Music
			Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services Strathblane House Ashfield Road Cheadle Stockport SK8 1BB

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is effective overall and provides satisfactory value for money. There are

strengths in pupils' achievements in reading and science and in aspects of the curriculum. There is some underachievement in information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 6 and in mathematics, in Year 2. There are weaknesses in teaching in the reception class.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards and achievement in reading and science are above average throughout the school.
- Standards in ICT are below expectations in the present Year 6.
- There are weaknesses in teaching in the reception class.
- There is underachievement in mathematics in Year 2.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave well.
- The very good opportunities offered to pupils outside the school day, contribute very well to their learning, care and personal development.
- Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to their good relationships and eagerness to accept responsibility and show initiative.
- Improvements in facilities have taken place because the school has canvassed and acted upon pupils' views.
- The good links established with parents contribute well to pupils' learning.

Improvement since the last inspection has been **satisfactory**. Standards have risen, especially in Year 6, recently. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and there has been very good improvement in the quality of information provided for parents. Standards in ICT in Year 6 have not improved enough.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end		similar schools		
of Year 6, compared with:	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	А	A
mathematics	E	D	В	В
science	D	E	В	В

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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.

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils enter the school with average standards and achieve satisfactorily in the reception class. Standards and achievement in reading and science are above average throughout the school. There is underachievement in mathematics in Year 2. Standards in Year 6 have improved considerably in the 2003 national tests as a result of well-focussed teaching and provision. Presently, standards in ICT in Year 6 are below expectations.

Pupils' **personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are all **good**. They enjoy school and display a keen interest in lessons and in the many activities offered. Pupils' **behaviour** is **good**. **Attendance is good** but punctuality is only **satisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. There is consistently good teaching in Years 1 and 6. English and science are taught well and specialist teaching in English and mathematics, in Years 3 and 6, and in music throughout the

school, contributes well to pupils' good achievements. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of reception children. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is **satisfactory** overall, but **good** for pupils with a statement of special educational need. The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. It is very well enriched by visits and visitors and by the range of activities offered outside the classroom. Until very recently the ICT curriculum has been too narrow. Pupils' care is **satisfactory** and the school has established a **good** partnership with parents, the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are all **satisfactory**. The headteacher has taken effective action to address weaknesses in standards in Year 6 but the action taken to improve provision in the reception class has not been fully successful. The deputy headteacher has made significant contributions to raising standards, especially in science. Governors exercise sound financial management and have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are particularly pleased about how much their children like the school and how hard they are expected to work. They rightly appreciate the diverse range of activities offered to pupils and how good arrangements are for helping their children to settle in to school. Pupils are pleased that improvements to the facilities have taken place as a result of requests through the school council, but older pupils understandably would like new furniture to replace the tired, out-of-date desks upon which they presently have to work.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards in and the use of ICT.
- Ensure that weaknesses in teaching in the reception class are addressed.
- Raise achievement in mathematics in Year 2.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children in the reception class achieve satisfactorily and most are likely to reach the early learning goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1. Standards and achievement in reading and science are above average throughout the school. In ICT, Year 6 pupils underachieve and attain standards below expectations. There is some underachievement in mathematics in Year 2. In all other subjects about which it was possible to make a judgement, standards and achievement are presently satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement in reading and science are good.
- In ICT, standards and achievement are presently too low in the present Year 6.
- In Year 2, there is some underachievement in mathematics.
- There was a good improvement, compared with the previous two years in the standards Year 6 pupils achieved in the 2003 national tests.

Commentary

In the reception class, pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, in all aspects of their learning. However, weaknesses in teaching lead to some underachievement in individual lessons, especially those in which pupils have more freedom to choose their own activities.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (17.5)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (16.3)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (16.5)	16.5 (16.4)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 1. Standards in the 2003, Year 2 national tests were lower than in previous years in all three subjects. This reflected a year group with lower average attainment who had some disruption to their learning in Year 1. However, the relatively weaker performance in mathematics reflects some underachievement, especially amongst less-able pupils. During the inspection it was noted that there were too low expectations of what less-able pupils in Year 2 should achieve in mathematics. Although the school has identified mathematical topics in which pupils do less well in the national tests, the action taken to improve pupils' standards has been largely ineffective.
- 2. Because of consistently good teaching in Year 1, pupils in this class achieve well in all subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (26.9)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.1 (25.9)	27.0 (26.7)
science	29.4 (27.2)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 3. In 2003, the Year 6 results improved very well, in all three subjects. Specialist teaching, in English and mathematics and the good use of test data, in science, contributed significantly to these improvements. Well taught and attended booster lessons (extra lessons to help pupils reach the expected Level 4 and above) also played their part in much better test results. Present levels of attainment represented a good improvement on those found at the time of the last inspection.
- 4. The present Year 6 has a slightly lower average attainment than last year, but standards in English, science are above expectations and in most other subjects inspected are broadly in line with expectations. However, in ICT, they are below that expected. A lack of resources has contributed to older pupils' underachievement in the subject.
- 5. In Years 3 to 5, pupils achieve satisfactorily. In Year 6, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science, as a result of good teaching.
- 6. Overall, pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, with some attaining expected levels in national tests. Pupils with a statement of special educational need often make good progress in lessons and achieve well, because they receive a lot of well-focussed individual support.
- 7. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily to support other subjects. Some examples of pupils using diaries and letter writing skills well, were observed in history. Pupils used tables and graphs to good effect in science lessons. Their ability to use ICT to underpin and extend their subject knowledge and understanding is underdeveloped.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are **good**. Their attendance is **good** and their punctuality is **satisfactory**. The schools' provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' spirituality.
- Provision for pupils' social development is good.
- Pupils like their school. They get on well with each other and all the adults who work with them.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. They thrive on responsibility and eagerly contribute to all aspects of school life.
- Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is good. There is very little bullying.
- Personal, social, health and citizenship lessons are helping pupils to prepare for their adult lives.
- Attendance is good with the school having good arrangements for ensuring that pupils come to school and arrive on time every day.
- The failure of a minority of parents to ensure that their children arrive on time.

- 8. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils are helped to develop spiritual awareness in many areas of the curriculum, particularly in religious education and in personal and social education. Acts of collective worship offer opportunities for stillness and reflection and enable pupils to consider a range of themes such as consideration for and helping others. Pupils pray regularly with a sense of reverence and are encouraged to make up their own prayers.
- 9. Christian values and beliefs underpin all aspects of the school's life and work. Its promotion of pupils' moral development and awareness of the wider world is good. Pupils have a good

understanding of right and wrong and that it is not always easy to decide what is right. For instance, in a good Year 6 citizenship lesson pupils were faced with dilemmas, which made them think deeply about their own moral values and how to reconcile conflicting pressures.

- 10. Pupils are taught to value their own culture and that of others. The school makes them aware of the values and traditions of other cultures by inviting visitors into the school to talk to pupils about their lives. Pupils are made aware of their own culture and history, as a result of history and geography lessons and visits within the town and further afield. The school encourages pupils' aesthetic awareness and involvement through such events as musical productions and having an artist-in-residence.
- 11. The school provides a good range of experiences to promote the pupils' social development. Pupils have a sense of what it means to live in and contribute to communities. Praise is used frequently to improve self-esteem and confidence and pupils are conscious of their own worth. The school successfully fosters a sense of citizenship by raising funds each year for a variety of charitable causes. The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to assume responsibilities. Year 6 pupils play an important role in the school. For instance, as prefects they have certain responsibilities in other classes. Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to make a formal contribution to school life through the pupils' School Council.
- 12. The pupils at St. Peter and St. Paul School enjoy coming to school. They get on well with each other and all the adults who work with them. They are polite and confident, greeting visitors with cheery smiles and offers of help. Pupils actively contribute to their community and readily help each other. They fetch and carry registers and help to keep the playground tidy. Older pupils proudly help younger pupils with their reading and look after them at lunch and play times. They ensure that lunchtime routines run smoothly and ring the school bell. Members of the school council take their responsibilities very seriously. The quiet area in the playground was, for example, their idea.
- 13. Behaviour is good overall and lessons are rarely, if ever, interrupted by bad behaviour. Many lessons hum with activity as pupils concentrate and get on with their work. In a Year 4 physical education lesson, for example, pupils' work on balancing and posture reached a high standard because they concentrated, tried their best and worked well together. Playtimes, because of the absence of bullying and poor behaviour, are happy times with children of all ages involved in a wide range of running, jumping, chasing and ball games. Pupils are confident that if any bullying did occur it would be dealt with quickly, firmly and fairly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised a	absence
School data 4.4		School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

14. The school has good attendance monitoring systems and works closely with the local education authority welfare officer. Attendance, therefore, is good but would be even better if it were not for the number of pupils who are taken on holiday during term time. The majority of pupils arrive in time for the start of the school day, but a small number of parents fail to get their children to school on time. Lessons start and finish promptly.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
193	1	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching is consistently good for Year 1 and Year 6, but there are some weaknesses in teaching in the reception class and in mathematics in Year 2. There are good opportunities for enrichment in the curriculum. The quality of care is good and pupils are well provided for. There are some weaknesses in accommodation but resources to support learning are good. Effective links with parents contribute well to pupils' achievements.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. The quality of teachers' assessments is **good** overall. Pupils in Year 1 and in Year 6 receive consistently good teaching and achieve well in most areas of their learning. Some weaker teaching in the reception class and in mathematics in Year 2, leads to underachievement for some pupils. The quality of teaching is similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' use of assessment is better than found at that time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good for pupils in Years 1 and 6.
- There are some weaknesses in teaching in the reception class.
- The teaching of reading and science is good throughout the school.
- Teachers' use of assessment and homework contributes well to helping pupils improve.
- Too low expectations of less-able Year 2 pupils, leads to their underachivement in mathematics.
- Many teachers use resources imaginatively to interest pupils and to help them overcome difficulties.
- Because pupils work so well together they help each other make good progress in many lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in thirty lessons

ſ	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	0	3 (10 %)	11 (37%)	14 (47%)	2 (6%)	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. The quality of teaching in Year 1 and Year 6 is consistently good. In Year 6, as last year, English and mathematics are taught by a specialist teacher. In English, this has meant that good standards have been maintained. In mathematics, standards have improved well as a result of more rigorous teaching, especially for the more-able pupils. In all the lessons observed in Year 1 and in Year 6, pupils were made to work hard, behave well and provided with work that matched their needs well. As a result, they were motivated, productive and enjoyed learning.
- 16. In some lessons in the reception class, there are weaknesses in classroom organisation and behaviour management, which result in children not making enough progress. For instance, in a lesson observed, children were restricted to one activity for too long a period, causing them to lose interest and become restless, and in another lesson the activities provided were not well planned or sufficiently engaging so that some pupils misbehaved.
- 17. Pupils are taught to read well throughout the school. They are provided with a good range of books, encouraged to read diversely and frequently. Teachers' effective links with parents mean that good reading habits are promoted consistently in school and at home. As a result, standards in reading are consistently above average.
- 18. In science, because the subject is well managed, the staff have been enabled to teach the subject effectively throughout the school and to promote above average standards. Pupils are taught to carry out reliable investigations from an early age (Year 1) which provides them with a very secure base for acquiring scientific knowledge and skills.
- 19. The quality of teachers' assessments promotes many good lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and use the effective analysis of test data to ensure that in most lessons pupils are set tasks, which reflect their needs well. An exception is in mathematics, in Year 2, in which the work set for less-able pupils is not difficult enough, which indicates a lack of rigorous assessment. Teachers use homework well, to both reinforce basic literacy and numeracy skills and to extend pupils' learning in a variety of subjects. Most teachers are rigorous in both setting and marking homework. As a result, pupils learn well and develop a good ability to work independently. In the reception class assessments are not always used well enough to set work which ensures children's consistent progress.
- 20. In many lessons, teachers make imaginative use of good quality resources to interest pupils and to help them overcome difficulties. For instance, in a well taught Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher's choice of focus for pie-charts, engaged pupils' interest well, and in a very good Year 6 English lesson, boys particularly, were helped to improve their poetry reading, because of the teacher's lively delivery of interesting texts.
- 21. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. However, the focussed support provided for pupils with a statement of special educational need contributes well to their good progress in lessons. Pupils with physical disabilities are enabled to take a full part in all lessons and to contribute well to the learning of other pupils.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum **satisfactorily** meets the needs of pupils and statutory requirements are met. The curriculum provides **good** opportunities for enrichment. The quality and quantity of resources at the school are **good** and meet the needs of the curriculum. There are some weaknesses in accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is variable.
- The curriculum is enriched by good extra-curricular provision.
- Teachers' planning carefully incorporates strong links between the various subjects.

- The provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- There is no designated outside area for reception children.

Commentary

- 22. Because the inspection took place early in the term, the curriculum for, and the organisation of the reception class, is still being developed. As the information from assessment of what the children in the class already know and can do is collected, it can then guide the curriculum planning more fully. At the time of the inspection the curriculum lacked the richness of a wide range of related activities and the good quality resources are not fully utilised. Appropriate emphasis is given to the development of the children's reading, writing and number skills in adult-led activities where these skills are the specific focus. However, not enough is being done to ensure that the children participate in reading and writing as a natural part of other activities.
- 23. The school successfully provides activities to broaden pupils' experiences and enrich the curriculum and stimulate their work. These include visits to places of interest such as Wigan Pier, together with local museums and art galleries. Pupils enjoy visits from people with specialist knowledge and expertise. For example, during the inspection, pupils worked with the Artist in residence making high quality clay tiles. Dance is also taught by a specialist teacher, in the reception class whose work enhances the provision for children's physical development. Pupils also have experience of live theatre and musical performances.
- 24. The quality and range of activities provided outside lesson time are also stimulating and interesting. These are enjoyed by pupils and valued by parents. They include sporting and musical activities. There are also opportunities to learn French and to learn about French customs and to engage in various kinds of dance.
- 25. Teachers' plans incorporate strong links between the various subjects so that new learning in one subject consolidates previous learning in another. Literacy is frequently promoted through history, for example, when Year 6 pupils describe a day in the life of someone in a Victorian workhouse. History, art and design and mathematics were also successfully linked in a project on American piecework quilting. In Year 1, pupils used their numeracy skills well as they recorded results of their scientific investigation. However, the use of ICT to support lessons across the school is underdeveloped.
- 26. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is good. It helps to promote good behaviour and to develop pupils' positive attitudes to learning and to one another. The school follows a programme of work to develop personal and social education, including health education, which takes place mainly through designated lessons but also through subjects such as religious education and science. Attention is given to the dangers of the misuse of drugs and to sex education. There are good opportunities for pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills for making informed decisions about healthy living.
- 27. At present there is no outside-designated area for reception children and this restricts their use of large equipment and wheeled toys.

How well are pupils cared for, guided and supported.

The overall standard of care, guidance and support the school provides, is **satisfactory**. The monitoring of pupils' achievements and personal development is **good**. The school is **very good** at taking pupils' views into account and ensures that they are involved in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

• The good systems for providing every pupil in the school with academic and personal guidance and advice.

- The good support for pupils with a statement of special educational need.
- The arrangements for introducing new pupils, whatever their age, into the school community.
- The way that the school, particularly through the school council, seeks and acts upon pupils' ideas and views.
- The poor condition of some of the lavatories and the general untidiness of the school.

Commentary

- 28. Teachers and support staff know their pupils really well. As a result, they often help pupils make good progress. As pupils move through the school a comprehensive record of their learning and personal needs and achievements goes with them. A "hand over" of pupils from one teacher to the next ensures good continuity and enables pupils to feel secure. Pupils who have a statement of special educational need make good progress in lessons. They are well supported in class and, where necessary, are helped by specialists from the local education authority and other agencies.
- 29. The school takes great care to welcome new pupils and ensure that they settle into schoollife and learning as quickly as possible. For reception children there is a series of valuable visits and meetings. Older children and their parents are shown around before they join and are well looked after.
- 30. The school welcomes pupils' ideas and encourages them to contribute to school life. Contributions increase as pupils get older. When they reach Year 6 everyone has a specific role, such as, house captain, monitor or prefect. The school council is very successful. In the two years since it was set up it has successfully lobbied for a quiet area and for improvements to the playground and toys. Its criticism of the condition of some lavatories is justified.
- 31. First-aid arrangements are good. The arrangements for dealing with emergencies and contacting parents if their children are ill are good. Pupils are well supervised at the beginning and end of the school day and during trips, such as swimming, off the school site. The headteacher carries out regular safety checks of the premises, but a weakness of the present health and safety arrangements is the hazards caused by excessive clutter in the hall and corridors. Some of the toilets are in very poor condition and in urgent need of refurbishment. The school is well aware of this problem and plans are in hand to deal with it.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links which the school has with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are **good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good information which parents receive about the school and their children's progress.
- The contribution which parents make to their children's education.
- The school's open door approach to communication with parents encourages a positive partnership.
- The positive impact on pupils' learning of the teachers' links with other schools and local colleges and the school's input to the local community.
- There are no formal arrangements for regularly gathering parents' ideas and opinions about proposed changes, possible developments and the way that the school operates.

Commentary

32. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and what's happening in school. Alongside the formal meetings, which are very well attended, and very good end of

year reports, there are ample opportunities for parents to talk informally to the teachers at, for example, the beginning and end of the school day. The headteacher insists on an open-door policy and parents are always welcome in the school. Newsletters, curricular plans, and formal documents such as the prospectus and governors' annual report, all help to make sure that parents know what is going on. The school values parents' views and ideas but it does not, as yet have any systematic means of collecting them.

- 33. Parents willingly and effectively help their children to learn. The majority supports their children with their homework and helps them to read. Many come into school on a regular basis to help out with, for example, reading and craft activities. Assemblies, religious celebrations and events such as parent-pupil discos and the summer fair are always well supported. In the last few years, parents have raised more than £10,000 to help with the cost of improvements to the site. Breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs help to look after children whose parents and carers have commitments at the beginning and end of the school day and during holidays.
- 34. The school is a member of a local "small school" group whose members provide mutual support and "critical friendship" on matters ranging from accommodation to teaching. Teachers visit "beacon schools" to gain first hand experience of how, for example, to make use of the latest ICT. Year 5 pupils recently visited the local further education college, so they could make of use of the more sophisticated computer equipment.
- 35. The school makes a good contribution to the local community. Various charities benefit from fundraising activities. The school welcomes work experience students from local colleges. It is a normal part of school life to have trainee teachers and post-graduate students on site.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management and governance is **satisfactory**. The headteacher and governors are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and overall they take effective action to improve provision. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and other key staff, who have made important contributions to raising standards. The action taken to address some weaknesses in achievement in mathematics and teaching in the reception class has not been fully effective. Leadership, management and governance were judged to be good at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of English and science have resulted in pupils' good standards and achievements in these subjects.
- The school's strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils are included in the full range of activities contributes well to their achievements and the positive ethos of the school.
- Teachers with specialist expertise are well deployed.
- Not all the actions taken to improve provision have been effective enough.

- 36. Governors satisfactorily contribute to the direction that the school should follow based on their sound knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, they have directed resources towards the provision of a well-equipped ICT suite knowing that standards in that area of the curriculum needed to improve.
- 37. Key staff in the school satisfactorily promote good achievement and improving standards. The school's improvement plan provides a secure basis for key staff to take relevant action to improve standards in relatively weaker areas. Boys writing, for instance, has improved well recently as a result of the effective action taken to provide boys with relevant writing tasks. Because of the school's commitment to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of ability are as

fully included as possible in its work, pupils enjoy school, find it a happy place in which to learn and have access to all activities on offer. Pupils with a statement of special educational need are particularly well provided for and play a full part in school life. Governors and the school's management do all they can to encourage pupils to regard school and learning positively. The provision of successful before and after-school clubs is testimony to their keen commitment to parents and pupils.

- 38. Overall, the school's self evaluation is used well to raise standards. Because of the effective action taken, based on the careful analysis of test results and of the close tracking of pupils' progress, standards have risen in science throughout the school and in mathematics in Year 6. A strength in management contributing to these improvements has been a commitment to effective staff training. However, despite the school's awareness that there are weaknesses in provision in the reception class and underachivement in mathematics in Year 2, the action taken to address these weaknesses has not been fully effective.
- 39. Another factor that has contributed well to advancing pupils' standards and achievements is the good deployment of staff with specialist expertise. In mathematics, English and music pupils benefit well from staff with particular expertise, teaching more than one class.

26,421 24.745

Income and expenditure ((£)	Balances (£)
Total income	425,151	Balance from previous year
Total expenditure	400,406	Balance carried forward to the next
Expenditure per pupil	2,074	

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision is **satisfactory**. However, there are weaknesses in the planning of the curriculum, which at times prevents the children from achieving as well as they should. Induction procedures are good. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision for knowledge and understanding or for creative development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in taking care of their own personal needs, getting on with others and being confident to try new things.
- The behaviour of a small minority of children is not well managed.

Commentary

40. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children enjoy coming to school and have a positive attitude towards learning. This is shown by the good behaviour of most children and their interest and participation in the range of activities provided. Children have opportunities to develop responsibility and independence, for example, getting themselves ready for their dance lesson and helping to tidy up at the end of sessions. There are good relationships between staff and children and between the children, who chat and play with one another and share resources amicably. Children's knowledge about other aspects of school life is enhanced when they attend assemblies and have lunch and play with older pupils. On one occasion, a few pupils become boisterous and over excited when engaged in activities and this situation was not managed effectively. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they reach Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are insufficient activities to extend the children's reading and writing skills.
- Children have good opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

41. Teaching in this area is generally satisfactory, but there are weaknesses. The children are not progressing as much as they might and some will not achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they reach Year 1. Direct teaching sessions tend to stand alone rather than form an integral part of the whole curriculum and pupils do not practise or apply their learning in other aspects. For example, in a session following an introduction with the whole class on one letter sound, most children were engaged in activities which did not extend their learning. Work in the teacher-directed activity lacked challenge and there was no adult intervention or interaction to promote learning in the other activities the children were engaged in. Children enjoy listening to stories. The lively reading by an adult, with attention to detail in the pictures, ensured that children listened intently to a story about a new baby. Staff successfully initiate discussions to develop language and extend children's ideas. In one

session, as some children talked about their experience of hospitals and doctors, others became interested and contributed their views, with some posing their own questions.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy working with numbers.
- Children are not always sufficiently challenged with relevant activities.

Commentary

42. The children enjoy the practical counting sessions and the activities which involve number. They 'measure' themselves and are developing the concept of long and short. Most count to at least ten and recognise symbols up to five. Nearly all count up to five objects correctly. Several children work well on the computer successfully completing simple number programmes. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area. Teaching is satisfactory, but some of the activities in which the pupils engage lack challenge. This is because adults do not always take into account what the children already know and can do. For example, a whole session was spent concentrating specifically on the number four instead of dealing with it in the context of other numbers.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of the dance programme is very good.
- There is no enclosed, designated outdoor learning area for the reception class.

- 43. Teaching is satisfactory. There are adequate space, objects and construction materials to prompt the development of the children's manipulative skills and co-ordination. Children use scissors, moulding materials, brushes and pencils in a variety of activities. There is a very good range of small and large apparatus for use outside the classroom, which at present is used infrequently, because there is no immediate access to the outside area. The children have structured lessons in the school hall which are taken by a specialist dance teacher. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was very good. Children responded imaginatively to the teachers' directions displaying a very good awareness of space. They moved with control and co-ordination as they performed their dance, listening carefully and responding positively to the clear guidance on how to improve their skills.
- 44. Since the previous inspection there has been a good improvement in the quality and quantity of resources for the Foundation Stage. Other provision remains satisfactory. The quality of teaching was judged to be good but is now judged to be satisfactory overall.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievements of the most-able pupils in Year 6, in the 2003 national tests, were better compared with previous years.
- The standard of reading throughout the school is good.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge promotes good learning in Years 1,3 and 6.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 and 2 is good.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of pupils' handwriting, especially in Years 3 to 6.

- 45. Standards in reading throughout the school, and in speaking and listening and in writing in Year 6, are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening and writing, in Year 2, are in line with national expectations. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection.
- 46. In the Year 6 national tests in recent years, the most-able pupils have tended to underachieve, a lower than average percentage gaining the higher Level 5. In the 2003 Year 6 tests, the most-able pupils achieved better, resulting in the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 rising above the national average. This improvement is being maintained this year because of the very good teaching in Year 6, based upon the careful identification of what pupils need to do in order to improve.
- 47. The good standard of reading throughout the school is an improvement since the last inspection. The attainment of all pupils is carefully tracked and any pupils experiencing difficulty are given extra support. The teaching of reading for pupils in Year 1 is very well organised. For instance, pupils are introduced to and become familiar with word sounds, through the teacher's and learning support assistant's imaginative use of puppets. While the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, the good quality of learning in Years 1 and 3 and the very good quality of learning in Year 6, results from the teachers' good subject knowledge and carefully planned lessons. This ensures that all pupils improve rapidly to meet their literacy targets, which are displayed at the front of their books. This was evident in a very good Year 6 lesson, where all pupils improved and extended their use of metaphors, personification and alliteration when writing poems for National Poetry Week.
- 48. The subject is well led and managed. Using the evidence gained from close analysis of test data and sampling of pupils' work, the co-ordinator has ensured that there is specific reading material to appeal to older boys and strategies to improve the writing of the more-able in Year 6; both of these approaches have been successful and standards have risen. There are good resources available to support teaching. However, a relative weakness in management has been the lack of observation and monitoring of lessons by the co-ordinator or to model her very good teaching to less experienced colleagues.
- 49. Pupils with special educational needs, in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. As a result of the input from the knowledgeable and well-trained literacy support assistant, their progress in reading is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- 50. The standard of pupils' handwriting varies, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Not all pupils correctly use a pen or pencil to write. It is likely that the adoption of a common approach to teaching handwriting throughout the school would help raise standards in this skill.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum.

51. Pupils' literacy skills are used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects. Many pupils apply their speaking skills well when participating in dramatic productions such as, 'Bugsy Malone'. Good examples of pupils using their skills in letter writing and in note taking were observed in their history and science work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Underachivement in Year 2 and a failure in leadership and management to fully address this weakness.
- The good quality of teaching in Year 6 which is leading to improved standards.

- 52. Overall, standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with expectations. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
- 53. In recent years, with the exception of 2002, the standards achieved in the Year 2 national tests have been too low. They have consistently lagged behind results in reading and writing. A weakness in the leadership and management of the subject has been the failure to fully address this issue. Despite close analysis of test papers, which has revealed gaps in pupils' knowledge, for instance, in telling the time and in place value, and action taken to place more emphasis in lessons upon these areas, some relative weaknesses in teaching in Year 2 have not been identified. Because the expectations of the less-able pupils in this year group often are too low, more pupils fail to reach the expected Level 2 than in reading or writing.
- 54. In the last academic year, the school decided to deploy a specialist teacher in Year 6 to address the issue of some underachievement of more-able pupils in national tests. Over the previous two years too few pupils had reached the higher Level 5. As a result of more focussed and rigorous teaching, results improved in the 2003 tests with many more pupils attaining at Level 5. Teaching remains good for the present Year 6. Lessons are well paced, explanations are clear and effective questioning ensures that all pupils are made to think. Because pupils' ability to solve problems written in words, and involving more than one set of calculations, was identified as a weakness, the school has given pupils more instruction and practice in this area of their work to help them improve. Standards have risen as a result and pupils now achieve satisfactorily.
- 55. As a result of satisfactory teaching throughout Years 3 to 6, more-able pupils have a good grasp of basic number and develop a range of strategies to simplify their calculations. Amongst less-able pupils their lack of a firm grasp of number facts and multiplication tables often means that they arrive at the wrong answer to problems even when they use the correct method. Throughout the school, teachers use homework well to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.
- 56. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and closely follows the National Numeracy Strategy. Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. In addition to the strengths and weaknesses already outlined in this section, teachers are well-supported by a clear policy and relevant action plan, both of which provide sound guidance about the school's approach to teaching and which areas need special attention in order to raise pupils' achievement. The provision of resources is good and makes a positive contribution to improvements in pupils' understanding of, for example, concepts of shape and space.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects, for instance, to construct graphs and tables to illustrate their findings in science investigations, in drawing maps with co-ordinates, in geography, and in compiling timelines in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader is meticulous when reviewing and analysing the results of statutory and voluntary tests and modifying the curriculum accordingly.
- The schools' planning for and assessment of the subject is good and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Teachers place a good emphasis on developing investigative and experimental skills in science.
- The pupils enjoy their science lessons and work well together.

- 58. Inspection findings are that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are above those attained by pupils of similar ages nationally. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were found to be in line with the national average. The standards reached are similar to those achieved by Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2003. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well as they progress through the school.
- 59. Teaching is based on the very secure subject knowledge and understanding of teachers and derives from a well-structured teaching programme that sets out exactly what pupils are expected to learn in each class. Lessons are well organised and very well managed. Teaching methods include effective questioning, which draws on pupils' previous learning and extends their thinking. Teachers ensure that correct scientific vocabulary is used throughout lessons. Pupils engage in interesting practical activities and carry out a variety of investigations. Pupils in Year 1 were given the challenging task of finding out whether there is a correlation between age and height. The lesson proved to be a good introduction to investigative techniques as pupils carefully recorded their findings and tentatively talked about their conclusions, very aware that investigation means 'finding out'. Year 6 pupils were successfully helped to set up an investigation to discover whether fertiliser improves plant growth. The teacher interspersed clear explanations and demonstrations with well thought out questions. She presented scientific facts to the pupils turning this into a process of sharing her knowledge with them, which encouraged a mature and reflective response. In some lessons, the use of worksheets resulted in pupils being over-directed as they set up their investigations and restricted their independent learning.
- 60. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader has a clear view of the aims and priorities for science in the school. Test results and teachers' own assessments of attainment are carefully analysed to identify any weaknesses in pupils' learning, and subsequent planning takes account of this. The information is used carefully to track the progress of individual pupils and to set targets for them. In addition to monitoring pupils' completed work, the subject manager observes lessons in other classrooms and provides colleagues with constructive feedback. All of this very good practice results in pupils having above average standards and good achievement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory** for pupils in Years 1 and 2 but **unsatisfactory** for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

During the inspection no discrete information and communication technology lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Evidence is based on work carried out by pupils in support of other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The small number, old age and unreliability of the computers in Years 3 to 6, prior to the recent opening of the new ICT suite, has meant that standards in Year 6 are below national expectations.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not use the Internet or CD-ROM sources sufficiently to gather information to support their learning or for research into topics for other subjects.
- The frequently changing management has meant a lack of coherent planning.
- The teacher in Year 1 uses the good quality computers and software in her classroom to make lessons interesting and imaginative.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and well-planned lessons lead to good quality learning in Years 5 and 6 in the new ICT suite.

- 61. At the time of the last inspection, standards in Year 2 and Year 6 were unsatisfactory. They remain unsatisfactory in Year 6, but in line with national expectations in Year 2. Despite the very best efforts of staff, including taking pupils in Year 5 to the local High School for a series of lessons on control programs, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have received insufficient provision or teaching to reach the nationally expected standard. This is because the quality and quantity resources have been unsatisfactory. However, the new well-resourced ICT suite is now open and this promises to raise standards. While pupils in Year 6 accessed the Internet to research information for a history project, the lack of suitable computers meant that their opportunities have been limited. However, in the new ICT suite, all pupils in Year 6 use a search engine to investigate and research Victorian life, working collaboratively in pairs using good note-taking skills.
- 62. In Year 1, the teacher used good quality ICT software to enthuse pupils to achieve well. They took digital photographs of good and bad features of the local area, which were then included in a *Powerpoint* presentation. The more-able pupils used well-formed sentences and clear voices to state their reasons for selecting these features.
- 63. The frequent changes of management in the subject, three co-ordinators in the last three years, have meant that no-one has had a secure overview of provision. However, the new co-ordinator has introduced a very thorough assessment system to help teachers analyse weaker areas in pupils' knowledge and understanding and this is being used effectively to help pupils improve in those areas.
- 64. The teachers' expertise and the well-planned lessons for Years 5 and 6 observed in the new ICT suite, led to good quality learning and progress. Pupils were given clear instructions and targets to complete tasks, so that the lesson proceeded at a brisk pace. In Year 5, pupils drew a plan of their classroom, using a graphics program, and soon learned to competently resize, move and rotate shapes.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum.

65. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but due to the previous lack of resources, it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils use and apply their literacy skills to word-process their work, for example, pupils in Year 2 wrote instructions on how to make a sandwich. Pupils with special education needs effectively used a computer program to help to improve their spelling and to consolidate their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes in mathematics.

HUMANITIES

- 66. During the inspection one history lesson was observed in Year 5 and one geography lesson in Year 3. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about provision in either subject. Because of the denominational status of the school, religious education was not within the remit of this inspection but will be inspected separately by the Archdiocese.
- 67. In the Year 5 history lesson observed the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Pupils demonstrated a secure understanding of the differences between life in classrooms in Tudor times compared with their own and responded enthusiastically to the questions posed by the teacher and to the source materials from which they found information. Discussion with Year 6 pupils revealed that they have a satisfactory recall of royal dynasties and key events in history, but are less sure about how to distinguish between the reliability of different sources of evidence. Displays and the wok in pupils' books reveal a good range of writing, supporting the school's drive to improve writing throughout the school. Pupils have written well- researched letters, diaries and accounts to illustrate conditions for children in the Victorian era and indicate through their writing that they understand the difference between fact and opinion.
- 68. The satisfactory Year 3 geography lesson observed, indicates that most pupils knew what their hometown is most famous for and that it had a mining history. The teacher used resources well, including a model of the town shield, to interest pupils and to explain aspects of the town's history and geography. Pupils in Year 2 have produced maps of an island using simple co-ordinates to locate features.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were observed in **art and design** or in **design and technology**. Judgements on standards and teaching are, therefore, not possible in either subject, although there was some art and design work displayed throughout the school which indicated that standards in this subject match those expected nationally. Provision in art and design is significantly enhanced by lessons taught by a visiting art specialist. During the inspection, as a result of the very good input of the visiting artist, pupils produced well-crafted clay tiles which were to be subsequently fired.

Music

69. In a very good Year 2 music lesson, the quality of learning was very good and pupils achieved satisfactory standards in composing a tune for five unpitched instruments. However, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards at the end of Years 2 and 6.

Physical education

70. During the inspection three lessons were observed in total. Two of these were gymnastics lessons, in Years 2 and 4 and one was a swimming lesson for Year 3. It was therefore not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in the subject. In the Year 2 gymnastics lesson, pupils attained standards in line with expectations being taught satisfactorily. Many pupils demonstrated the ability to closely mirror the movements of a

partner and to use parts of their body to produce the effect their teacher required. In the Year 4 gymnastics lesson, pupils attained standards above those expected for their age as a result of good teaching. The lesson was briskly paced, interested the pupils and because the teacher used his good subject expertise to demonstrate good practice, pupils improved in their ability to balance on apparatus and to put together a smooth sequence of movements in pairs.

- 71. In the good swimming lesson observed, the teacher's expertise was used to good effect to help swimmers improve their style and non-swimmers their confidence in the water. Observations of after-school clubs, discussions with teachers and pupils and analysis of school records, indicate that pupils are well provided for in terms of coaching in football, tag rugby and netball. Boys and girls have had good success in local soccer and rugby competitions and all pupils compete in the school's annual sports day.
- 72. The subject contributes well to pupils' social, moral and cultural development as a result of competing against other schools and joining in a range of outdoor pursuits when older pupils stay in a residential centre.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assemblies are used well to promote a community spirit.
- Lessons promote pupils' safety, health education and sense of responsibility well.

- 73. Personal, social, health education is an important, integral part of day-to-day life at St. Peter and St. Paul's.
- 74. Good use is made of assemblies to help pupils develop their understanding of what it means to be contributing members of various communities. A whole school assembly, for example, explored and celebrated pupils' achievements both in and out of school. A Year 3 and 4 assembly focussed on the characteristics of a good job and a Year 5 and 6 assembly explored the idea and importance of politeness.
- 75. A good Year 6 lesson on moral dilemmas hummed with interest and enthusiasm as pupils maturely discussed how they would deal with situations such as being given too much change in a shop. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils enjoyed exploring family relationships with their teacher. Teachers regularly use links between other subjects and personal, social and health education to good effect. Examples of this were Year 1 and Year 2 lessons in which pupils learned about growing up and keeping healthy.
- 76. Good behaviour is the norm and pupils look after each other in class and around and about the school. Playtimes are happy and free from bullying as pupils play with and look after each other. Pupils of all ages, from reception to Year 6, are given and respond very positively to responsibility. Older pupils learn about the principles and practice of representing others through the work of the school council. Educational trips to local paces such as Wigan Pier provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of their heritage and the community in which they live. Residential trips to adventure centres in, for example, the Forest of Dean help older pupils develop their self-confidence and social skills.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of 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).