

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **THE GRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bootle

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104859

Headteacher: Mr B Norbury

Lead inspector: Frank Ravey

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 May 2004

Inspection number: 258125

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	262.5
School address:	Stonyfield Sefton Bootle Merseyside
Postcode:	L30 0QS
Telephone number:	0151 9247917
Fax number:	0151 9315729
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Bayes

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Grange Primary has a very unusual, perhaps unique, pupil profile. It caters not only for a full age range of mainstream<sup>1</sup> primary school pupils in three phases of schooling from nursery to Year 6 but also for a significant number of primary age pupils who have high levels of special educational needs. The school has five resourced classes<sup>2</sup> for these pupils, two for speech, language and communication difficulties, one for moderate learning difficulties, one for pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as moderate learning difficulties and one for pupils with autism. A further class for pupils with autism is being built and is due to open in September 2004. The school has 13 classes in all, five of which are resourced for pupils with special educational needs - more than the school has at any of the three phases of primary education. A total of 262 pupils are on roll. Fifty-five of these pupils have statements of special educational needs, a far higher proportion than in primary school nationally. Only one of these statemented pupils is in a mainstream class. The school states that its central aim is the inclusion and integration of pupils with special educational needs into its mainstream education provision as far as possible. No pupil is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and who speak English as an additional language, are from Eastern Europe. They are fully integrated into school life. During the year, the school admits a fairly small number of additional pupils. These often have special educational needs and their parents seek admission for them owing to the school's excellent reputation within the local authority for providing for special educational needs. The local area is very socially deprived. Nearly half the pupils on roll are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is well above the national average. When children start the nursery class, their attainment is well below average.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the report, '*mainstream*' refers to pupils, mainly from the local area, who are educated in the usual school setting for primary age pupils.

<sup>2</sup> '*resourced classes*' are those established by the local authority, under the control of the school, for pupils with high levels of special educational needs and who are often transported to the school from other parts of the local authority.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11371	F Ravey	Lead inspector	Science Information and communications technology Music English as an additional language
13450	J Madden	Lay inspector	
21243	L Moore	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology
30243	A Heakin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs
30651	M Entwistle	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
2465	G Yates	Team inspector	Science Physical education

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school** with some features of excellence. Pupils' achievement overall is very good because of very good curriculum provision and very effective teaching. The school achieves excellence in its primary goal of enabling all pupils to take part as fully as possible in the education it provides. It is this philosophy that is at the heart of very effective leadership and management. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well overall owing to very effective teaching and a very well designed curriculum.
- The school achieves great success in meeting its major aim to enable all pupils to take the fullest part possible in the education it provides.
- Provision in the resourced classes for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs in mainstream classes is very good.
- Provision in the foundation stage of learning is very good.
- The quality of care provided for pupils is excellent.
- School leadership, management and governance are very effective in enabling the school to achieve its aims.
- Standards in writing remain below average although they show good improvement recently.
- The rate of attendance is well below the national average.

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 1999. Then it was judged to be very good, and no key issues for improvement were raised. The school has continued to build upon the strengths identified at that time although its pupil profile has changed significantly since then, with a much greater proportion of pupils on roll now being part of additional provision for pupils with special educational needs. Improvement has been particularly strong in science but has also been good in English and information and communication technology (ICT). The school has gone from strength to strength in ensuring that all pupils take as full a part as possible in the education it provides. Good improvement has been made in the resources available to enable it to meet its aims.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

**Pupils' achievement is very good overall.** The results in the above table do not represent an accurate picture of the school's performance as they include a significant proportion of pupils with high levels of special educational need, educated in the school as part of its resourced provision for such pupils. This proportion is much higher than in most schools because of the school's very strong commitment to providing for such pupils alongside other pupils. When statistics do not include pupils with such a high level of special educational needs, they show very clearly that standards last year were well above average overall compared with similar schools nationally. Children start in the nursery with well below average attainment. They make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and their attainment at the start of Year 1 is broadly average. Recent national test results indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below average. However,

inspection findings show a much stronger picture, with pupils attaining average standards in mathematics and science and below average standards overall in English. Attainment at Year 6 is also higher overall than most recent national test results suggest, being above average in science, average in mathematics, ICT and religious education and reading but below average in writing. Taken overall, this indicates very good progress from nursery to Year 6. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. Pupils achieve very well in science throughout the school and in English in Year 6. They achieve well in English in all other years and in mathematics and ICT throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well overall although achievement is strongest in the resourced classes. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups also achieve very well. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is below the national average and a small number of pupils are persistently late despite the school's strenuous efforts to improve these aspects.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a very good quality of education. The quality of teaching is very good overall,** enabling pupils to work very productively. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 and 2 and for pupils with special educational needs in the resourced classes. It is good with some very good features in Years 3 to 6. The school's curriculum is very well organised to enable staff and pupils to make the most of learning opportunities each day. The curriculum is very well resourced. The school achieves excellence in enabling all its pupils to be equally included in the education it provides and in the quality of its care and welfare. It maintains a very good partnership overall with parents, other schools and the local community. Its international links are outstanding.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The quality of the school's leadership, management and governance is very good.** The headteacher is inspirational and tireless in his search for excellence and new challenges. He is supported very well by a high quality leadership team and by staff who are united in their vision of excellence for the school and who have the professional qualities to enable this to be achieved. The governing body has significant expertise and guides the school very well although one statutory requirement has yet to be fulfilled. Together, school leaders and governors have created an outstanding school ethos that is founded upon the principles of inclusive education and the desire to improve performance continuously.

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

Parents and pupils express a high degree of satisfaction with the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in writing in Years 1 to 6;
- improve the rate of attendance;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that the governing body's annual report to parents contains all the required information.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is **very good** overall. Standards are **average** overall by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve **very well** overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well.
- Achievement in science is very good from Years 1 to 6.
- Achievement in English is very good in Year 6 and is good from Years 1 to 5.
- Achievement for pupils in the resourced provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Achievement in mathematics and ICT is good from Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes achieve well.
- Standards in science are above average at Year 6.
- Standards in writing should be higher in Years 3 to 5.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	10.9 (13.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	10.0(11.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	10.7(14.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 25 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	24.5 (22.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.8 (23.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.2 (25.1)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Data in the above tables give an inaccurate view of the school's performance. The data include pupils with high levels of special educational needs who are educated at the school and this depresses results significantly. The school is very highly committed to these pupils and their own achievement is very good but the requirement to include their test scores in the overall statistics means that these figures do not represent an accurate picture of the work of the school. When the test scores for these pupils are omitted, a different, more accurate picture emerges. Test results at Year 2 improve slightly but those at Year 6 improve considerably, indicating that overall in 2003, pupils at The Grange performed well above average compared to pupils nationally who had a similar range of national test scores when they were in Year 2. Performance at The Grange, measured this way, shows good and continual improvement in recent years, as the table below indicates.



Subject	2000	2001	2002	2003
English	D	D	B	A
Mathematics	D	C	A	B
Science	A	A	A	A
<b>Overall</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>

*A = well above average; B = above average; C = average; D = below average*

2. Test statistics are further influenced by the admission to the school during the year of other pupils with special educational needs, because of the school's excellent reputation for educating such pupils. At Year 2, pupils' attainment is also depressed by the high number of pupils with special educational needs although inspection evidence shows that the school is coping increasingly well with this situation. An indication of the extent of special educational needs is that each year group has an additional timetable for special educational needs in order to ensure the clear organisation of support.
3. Pupils' achievement is very good overall because a very well organised and well-designed curriculum is taught very effectively and pupils' progress is assessed very well. Resources, including staffing, are matched very well to curriculum needs and this plays an important part in the school's success in helping its pupils achieve so well. Very effective practice in ensuring that all pupils are equally included in learning activities helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well.
4. The 'big picture' on achievement at this school is clear:
  - Children start in the nursery class with well below average attainment.
  - Pupils leave Year 6 with standards that inspectors judge to be average overall.
  - This indicates that pupils make very good progress overall during their time at the school.
  - It also indicates that the school adds significant value to its pupils education, moving them up from well below average to average levels overall during their primary school years, and signals very good achievement.
  - Throughout the Foundation Stage, children achieve very well.
  - Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well overall in English and mathematics, with some very good achievement evident in English. Pupils achieve very well in science.
  - The school makes a big commitment to educating pupils with a high level of special educational needs as an integral part of its provision. These pupils form what amounts to an additional 'key stage' at the school. They achieve very well.
  - Pupils with special educational needs who are in mainstream classes also achieve very well.
5. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a very good start to their education through the very good teaching of a curriculum that is based firmly upon their learning needs. They make very good progress. Those children at present nearing the end of the reception year are attaining standards that match the levels expressed as average through the Early Learning Goals for children their age.
6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in literacy, numeracy and ICT and they achieve very well in science. Standards as expressed through the 2003 national test results at the end of Year 2 indicated well below average attainment but the present Year 2 are achieving standards that are average in reading, mathematics, science and ICT. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory and standards are average. Standards in writing have also improved but remain a little below average. Teachers and support staff have worked hard and very effectively to make the improvements that are now becoming evident in standards attained. The high achievement in science in Years 1 and 2 is due to the school's very effective focus on investigational learning and to teachers' high expectations as to how pupils should achieve within this framework.

7. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well in science and achieve well in English, mathematics and ICT. Achievement in religious education is satisfactory and standards are average. The high achievement in science is once again due to the school's very effective approach to investigational work and results in standards being above average at the end of Year 6. This broadly reflects the 2003 national test results. In English and mathematics, standards have risen from last year although in English they remain below average because of weaknesses in standards in writing in Years 3 to 5. Effective and sometimes very good teaching has led the drive for improvement in English and mathematics although a lack of consistency in expectation of high standards in punctuation, spelling and handwriting means that more needs to be done to achieve improvements, especially in Years 3 to 5. In ICT, standards are average at Year 2 and Year 6 but pupils achieve well in lessons because of excellent resources and effective teaching that is well focused upon the development and practise of key skills.
8. It was possible to see only limited amounts of work in other subjects but achievement in most lessons was rarely less than good and occasionally it was very good, especially in some art and religious education lessons. ICT is used well to help pupils develop skills in other subjects, particularly in science and mathematics. The skills of literacy are used satisfactorily across the curriculum although the below average standard of pupils' writing in Years 3 to 5 is evident in work in other subjects, for example, in science.
9. Pupils in mainstream classes who have special educational needs achieve very well. This is because teachers have a very good knowledge of their pupils and quickly identify any pupils who have special educational needs, providing suitable work to help meet such needs. The school rightly prides itself on being inclusive and provides a nurturing environment for all pupils. Children who have special educational needs in the mainstream part of the school are fully involved and have positive attitudes to learning. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils in their age groups.
10. Each year, the school sets realistic, challenging targets in English and mathematics for its Year 6 group of pupils. These targets are very carefully based upon close analysis of pupils' performance. The school achieves a considerable degree of success in achieving these targets although their challenging nature means that this is not always the case.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very happy in school, and their very good attitudes have a significant impact upon achievement.
- Behaviour in lessons and at play is very good.
- Relationships across the school are very good; pupils work well together and care for one another and their environment.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good; their moral and social development is very good, resulting in a strong community spirit. With all the other strengths, this makes provision overall very good.
- The personal and social development of children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The school has very good systems in place to promote attendance and punctuality. However, some parents' attitude to attendance and punctuality, especially in the reception year, is causing some children to miss important parts of their learning.

## Commentary

11. Throughout this school, regardless of key stage or section of the school, pupils exhibit very positive attitudes and are clearly very happy to be at school. They settle well to the work they are given, concentrate and persevere. There is a calm, friendly atmosphere in the school, which is reflected in the very good relationships amongst all who work there. Pupils of all ages and needs work and play together well. The very good attitudes and constructive relationships so much in evidence have a very positive impact upon pupils' learning.
12. Behaviour in lessons and at other times is very good and there have been no exclusions in the past year. A significant minority of pupils who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire provided for them, expressed some level of concern about behaviour but this view was not supported by inspection evidence. Parents' views about behaviour were very positive and these were supported by observations during the inspection. A good example of the high standard of behaviour is the way in which pupils have learned to behave very sensibly when moving around the school and outdoors at the starts and ends of break times without the need for more than minimal direct adult intervention. This also indicates how very effective teaching is in enabling pupils to combine independence with responsibility – something nurtured carefully from the Foundation Stage onwards. Equally impressively, pupils from the resourced classes for special educational needs behaved sensibly at the end of the school day when boarding the buses provided to take them home.
13. Spiritual education has improved well since the previous inspection. Pupils participate in day and residential visits to places of educational interest. These include religious buildings, and a range of visitors come into school to speak to the pupils about matters linked with their studies. Strong links have been developed with communities in other parts of the world, the most recent being with a city in China. Activities including teacher exchanges have broadened pupils' views of the world, provided an interesting "taste" of a modern foreign language and have linked very well with the geography curriculum.
14. Provision for pupils' moral and social education has improved well since the previous inspection, and is now very good. This has a clear and positive impact upon the positive relationships and very good behaviour observed. The school maintains a strong and practical code of moral values, based upon a deeply held belief that each child matters equally, no matter what their needs. This is very evident in its day-to-day work. Pupils work well together and care for one another and their environment, resulting in a strong community spirit. In addition, pupils are involved in fundraising for charities in this country and abroad. The impact of very high social expectations of pupils' behaviour is evident in the very sensible way pupils play together at break times and in the way they move so sensibly and safely around the school. It is grounded in the very good progress children make in developing social skills in the Foundation Stage.
15. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibilities in their class and around school and undertake these roles with care and maturity. The School Council is an effective forum for seeking pupils' views, and their suggestions and decisions are beginning to have an impact on the day-to-day running of the school.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.0	School data	0.2
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.*

16. The school makes immediate contact on a morning with parents about pupils who fail to arrive at school in order to check on their whereabouts. The Home School Liaison Officer will visit homes to collect children in cases of difficulty. Parents are supported by the school, which ensures all possible assistance is given to encourage pupils' attendance. The main problems lie with extended absence due to the illness of pupils or their parents and the reluctance of parents with children in the Reception class to recognise the need for continuous attendance to build a firm foundation for their future learning. Similarly, a small minority of pupils is persistently late despite the schools efforts to improve this situation. The rate of attendance for pupils in the resourced classes is very good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education overall for its pupils.

### Teaching and learning

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	20 (38%)	23 (45%)	8 (15%)	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.*

Teaching and learning are **very good** overall. They are **very good** in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 and 2 and for pupils with special educational needs. They are **good** with some very good features in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is **very good** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very effective focus on helping pupils develop the skills of independent learners.
- The strong influence teaching has on pupils' broader learning and development.
- Very good team work between teachers, support staff and helpers.
- Very good relationships form a firm foundation for learning.
- Very good use of resources helps teachers plan well to meet learning needs of all groups of pupils.
- Very good analysis of data helps the school keep a close check on pupils' achievement.
- Very good assessment helps teachers plan very effectively to meet pupils' learning needs although the school's marking policy is not always used consistently.

### Commentary

17. Teaching was at least very good in about two-fifths of lessons observed during the inspection and was good in most others. This indicates considerable strength in the teaching and its strong impact upon pupils' learning. During the inspection, teaching was strongest in the resourced classes for pupils with special educational needs, in Years 1 and 2 and in the Foundation Stage but very good teaching was also observed in Years 3 to 6.
18. Going beyond the statistics, teaching has a much wider influence in the school. The attitudes and values that pupils are encouraged to form are influenced in practice by the school's approach to teaching pupils to be independent and responsible learners from an early age. This starts in the Foundation Stage, where confidence, self-esteem and independence are cultivated very successfully. It forms part of the bedrock of values upon which the school's success is built and carries on throughout the school, manifesting itself not just in very good

attitudes to learning in lessons but also in the very responsible way pupils behave outside lessons. In this school, teaching contributes very strongly to pupils' broader personal and social learning and this is a significant factor in the judgement that it is very good. Very successful integration of pupils with significant levels of special educational needs into lessons enhances this aspect of learning still further.

19. Other factors that make teaching very effective are:
- a very well organised and very well resourced curriculum that leads to very effective teams of teachers and support staff in all classes. Teachers plan very carefully to make best use of resources in order to meet the learning needs of different groups of pupils. This enables pupils to achieve at least well in lessons and often very well;
  - a strong and effective focus on developing the skills of active learning. Pupils are taught to think carefully and this develops their learning skills. Staff have high expectations of the quality of pupils' thinking and responses. For example, pupils in a Year 2 science lesson were expected to understand that 'predictions' are more than good guesses and in fact arise from previous knowledge;
  - a strong focus on teaching skills – lessons are lively and interesting, and pupils learn the practice and not just the theory. This fits in very well with their stages of intellectual development and helps them to acquire skills and understanding very well. Homework is used effectively to extend pupils' learning;
  - very good relationships between adults and between pupils and adults means that a very positive climate for learning is established, one that endures even when a lesson is occasionally less successful. This climate for learning is based upon respect, trust and liking, and it forms the foundation for the growth of the independent learning skills identified above;
  - generally, rigorous marking and assessment of pupils' progress means that teachers and support staff know where pupils are up to in their learning and can set the targets that will move them on.
20. Many of these success factors arise from very effective practices relating to the management of the curriculum and resources, including finance. This is a very well organised school in which management practice has a clear and very positive impact on teaching and learning.
21. Occasionally, a lesson is less effective although still satisfactory, for example when a teacher's initial expectations for learning are not reinforced successfully or when a concept is not explored sufficiently deeply. Very occasionally, management of pupils is less successful in encouraging them to settle to work. On these few occasions, pupils do not learn well or achieve as well as they should.
22. Teaching of pupils who have special educational needs in mainstream classes is very good. The very good relationships and inclusive ethos impact favourably, making pupils interested in the activities planned for them. Teaching assistants are very well informed and work closely with class teachers providing consistent expectations and encouraging pupils to do their best. Pupils benefit from very good assessment of their difficulties. Adults are aware of pupils' different learning styles so they plan and organise activities appropriately. Individual educational plans and appropriate interventions based on assessment information enable pupils to achieve very well in reaching the challenging targets set for them.

## **Assessment**

23. The school has a very effective approach to collecting assessment data. Throughout the school, teachers carefully monitor and record pupils' progress using a range of formal and informal procedures. As a result, teachers know their pupils very well and share this information with non-teaching staff so that all adults work effectively as a team to raise standards. This is reflected in the very good teaching often seen during the inspection. The school is conscientious in analysing assessment information and making sure that the

progress of all pupils is monitored, with appropriate targets set for them in English and mathematics.

24. A strength of the school is its inclusive approach to education for all pupils and this is particularly evident in the use of assessment data to give individual or groups of children extra support to help them achieve well, particularly in English. Those pupils within the main part of the school who have special educational needs benefit from very good assessment of their difficulties. Adults are aware of pupils' different learning styles so they plan and organise activities appropriately. Individual educational plans and appropriate strategies for support, based on assessment information, enable pupils who have special educational needs to achieve very well.
25. The school has a well-considered and practical marking policy. This is used particularly well in English and, mostly, in other subjects. It provides pupils with greater knowledge of their work and how to improve it but an element of inconsistency sometimes becomes evident and then pupils are not given the pinpointed advice that would help them improve their work. The school recognises this as an area for improvement.

## The curriculum

The school provides a **very good** curriculum and a **good** range of enrichment opportunities. The resources and accommodation are **very good** with excellent ICT resources.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school timetable arrangements are highly effective in ensuring that the school provides a rigorous and highly organised curriculum.
- The emphasis the school places on the importance of inclusion results in excellent practice and this aspect is both implicit and explicit in every aspect of school life.
- The resources for ICT are excellent and the outside environment for learning is impressive.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs in the main school and in the units is very good. However, space is limited in one classroom.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## Commentary

26. The quality and range of curriculum provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage are very good. Children take part in a wide range of activities and experiences, developing the important foundations for independent learning. This is built upon very effectively in Years 1 to 6. A significant strength is the way in which the organisation of the school timetable enables three full teaching sessions each morning, with two more each afternoon. This not only maximises teaching time but allows teachers to mix lessons so that pupils have a change from literacy and numeracy lessons within the morning sessions. This in itself refreshes pupils' keenness to learn. The school's approach to timetabling is allied to its very good deployment of staff. Put together, the two factors result in substantial, well supported learning sessions. This impacts very positively upon achievement. The curriculum is very much focused upon developing skills and encouraging pupils to work independently and responsibly and to think for themselves. This impacts not only upon subject learning but also upon their attitudes and behaviour in other aspects of school life. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. Religious education is taught according to the expectations of the local agreed syllabus.
27. An excellent feature of the school's curriculum is the way that all pupils are included as far as possible in everything the school does. For example, pupils in the special needs resourced classes are not just integrated into lessons but are reintegrated into age groups. This results in pupils experiencing the full primary school curriculum within a mainstream setting. Curriculum planning is very good, with an appropriate emphasis on raising standards and meeting the

learning needs of all pupils, so that all have equal opportunities to achieve their best. Discussions held with pupils demonstrate that they enjoy lessons and like taking part in good range of extra curricular activities.

28. Since the previous inspection the school has improved its provision for personal and social education in line with national recommendations. Good systems are in place to develop personal, social and health education. During separate lessons, or during times when pupils discuss issues of concern to them, pupils develop a very good understanding of being considerate about the feelings and views of others. Aspects of health education are dealt with well and the school has won awards that are leading towards it becoming a 'healthy school'. Sex education and drugs misuse education are both dealt with appropriately. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. Assemblies provide thought provoking, reflective and inclusive messages. Together with religious education, they extend the Personal and Social Education Programme, effectively promoting the very good relationships found around the school.
29. The school provides a varied range of opportunities to enrich the curriculum; these include theatre groups, residential experiences and visits to museums. Special enrichment days such as *world book day* combine many subject areas. Very good links exist with the local community and people in the neighbourhood hold the school in high regard. A number of pupils benefit from instrumental music lessons. There is a wide range of clubs, including a good range of sports, all taking place at various times outside of the day so as to provide equality of opportunity for all. For example, a study support group is timetabled before school, with participating pupils able to have a breakfast before school starts. The school is open for learning from 7.45 a.m. until early evening – a good indication of the value it provides for its pupils and the local community. A particularly innovative aspect of its curriculum is the opportunities provided for pupils to study what life is like in China, with all pupils given the opportunity to learn Mandarin for one term each year, taught by teachers from the partner school in China. As a result, pupils of all ages enhance their perspectives of what life is like in the worldwide community.
30. Accommodation is very good and includes separate classrooms for pupils in the resourced classes. However, the class base for autistic pupils is too small and as such restricts pupils' movements. The large outdoor playing area, with tarmac and grass surfaces provides a very good facility. The garden area is an excellent resource not only for learning to take place but as a place where pupils can go and sit quietly.
31. There are very good resources for most subjects of the curriculum and excellent ICT resources. A key feature is the computerised whiteboards in all classrooms and in the school hall. This equipment is used extensively to assist teaching in many subjects of the curriculum. It is also used well for notices. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good.
32. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good. A strength of the school is its inclusive ethos and every effort is put in to make sure all pupils have the best opportunities for learning. All pupils in the mainstream classes who have special needs have Individual educational plans and where appropriate pupils are involved in discussing their targets and reviewing their progress. Frequently small groups of pupils are withdrawn for brief intensive work and then rejoin the rest of the class and are able to participate fully in the rest of the lesson because of the high quality intervention. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds receive the same high quality provision as other pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **excellent**. The school provides **very good** support, advice and guidance based on monitoring. There is **good** involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school gives very high priority to pupils' well being, providing an environment that is safe, supportive and enriching.
- As a result of staff's very good knowledge of pupils and of the quality of assessment taking place, pupils receive consistent and very well focused academic and pastoral support.
- Pupils are involved in the general life of the school, respected and listened to in the classroom and involved in their personal targets.

## Commentary

33. The school goes to great lengths to ensure pupils' care and welfare. Pupils' safety inside school is ensured by staff and every year in the school there is a 'Kidscape' programme to develop pupils' safety awareness and appropriate skills outside school. Child protection is comprehensively covered and the school works very closely with other agencies to safeguard children. The school is very well maintained and staff identify areas of concern carefully. For example, the school has recently resurfaced part of the playground when an analysis of the accident book revealed numerous falls and grazes. The Healthy Schools Initiative is an integral part of school life and all pupils are provided with fruit at morning break.
34. Most importantly, the school provides pupils with a learning environment in which they can develop safely and to their potential, both in academic subjects and in personal and social skills. The quality of the school environment promotes and enriches pupils' well-being, from attention to safety and risk assessment to the recreational quality of the school grounds. Pupils are all very well known individually to staff as pastoral carers and to teachers and teaching assistants as monitors of academic progress. Lessons are planned so that pupils' individual needs are taken into account through close match of work to learning needs and by the very good use of support staff. There are consistent opportunities before school and in holidays for pupils to receive extra support for their learning. Additional support is available in the school from all relevant outside agencies to help pupils achieve as well as they can. Pupils starting the reception year are already known to staff through the induction programme and close working relationships with the nursery.
35. There is great mutual respect between pupils and staff and this enables pupils to feel comfortable discussing their views and to know that they are listened to. A School Council is in place and is influencing decisions made by the school on issues such as playground markings, lunchtime menus and fundraising. In lessons, pupils are confident about asking questions and making a contribution to the lesson. Pupils are involved in monitoring their learning targets and those with special educational needs are very much involved in their reviews, planning and targets.
36. Pupils in the mainstream classes who have special educational needs are very well cared for. Very good links with external agencies means these pupils receive their entitlement to any extra resources that might be needed to help them benefit from the school provision. All adults are able to give well-informed advice and guidance to pupils, and very good relationships encourage pupils to ask for help and discuss their work. This boosts self-esteem and helps pupils who have special educational needs to achieve very well.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works **very well** in partnership with parents, other schools and the community. Links with parents and the community are **very good** whilst those with other schools and colleges are **good**.



## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with the school and know that it always has the best interests of their children at heart.
- Parents have easy and frequent contact with the staff and work in close partnership to ensure their children's progress.
- Links with the local and wider community serve pupils well in areas of the curriculum and personal development.
- The close working relationship with the school in China adds considerably to pupils' views of the wider world.

## Commentary

37. Parents feel a strong affinity for the school and most try very hard to support their children's learning. Homework has a very high profile in the school right from the time children enter the Reception class. Parents of pupils in the special needs resourced units have a daily discussion about their children with teachers, via home/school diaries. Through the Home School Liaison Officer and personal knowledge of families, the school is aware of the pastoral needs of pupils and works hard with families to support them, a fact very much appreciated by those parents and grandparents involved. The few complaints made by parents are dealt with before they become serious, and to the satisfaction of parents.
38. The school has very good links with parents. It is a friendly place where parents are welcome and well known to staff. They are able to discuss any queries with their child's teacher or with the headteacher, who is readily available. In particular, parents of pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 who bring their children to school, have a very easy and productive relationship with staff and have easy access to classrooms before and after school. The co-ordinator for special educational needs always attends parent evenings with class teachers so that parents of children who have special educational needs in the mainstream classes can be kept fully informed about the progress of their children and have the chance to discuss future provision.
39. The school sees itself as a part of the local community and has strong and wide-ranging contacts, ensuring that pupils have a considerable knowledge of local services and how to keep themselves safe within the community. The headteacher takes a leading role in many community initiatives and as such has been able to attract funding and initiatives to the school that benefit pupils greatly. There is great respect for the school in the local area and this appears to make a considerable contribution to the lack of vandalism on the premises.
40. Unusually there has developed a very close and productive relationship with a school in China with a similar set of circumstances and this has resulted in exchanges for the teachers and the opportunity for pupils to learn Mandarin for one term each year. This exchange has blossomed fruitfully, widened the horizons of pupils and made them aware of the real similarities and differences that exist in the world.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

School leadership and management are **very good**. School governance is **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- A clear, detailed and challenging vision for success is shared and continually put into practice by all staff.
- The headteacher has the highest possible aspirations for the school and inspires staff to achieve these with him.
- The skills of senior managers drive key areas of school activity with great success.

- A strong and effective focus on monitoring teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators, together with detailed analysis of performance data underpin a very effective process of school self-evaluation.
- Total commitment to the principles of inclusive education lie at the heart of the school's success.
- The governing body is very able and holds the school closely to account.
- Financial management is excellent and enables the school to be staffed and resourced very well.
- The governing body's annual report to parents does not contain all the required information.

## Commentary

41. The headteacher sets the tone for this school by his drive, energy, vision and skill. He manages finance in a way that allows the school to be very well resourced. This means that staff have the best tools possible to do the job of educating pupils. It also means that staffing levels are such that very strong and effective class teams provide pupils with very good support. Key managerial posts have been filled effectively. The school's management structure enables very effective management of the organisation of curriculum, resources and special needs. All senior staff provide excellent leadership of the curriculum and teaching, inspiring others by their example as well as managing with great efficiency.
42. The headteacher's vision of a school that integrates a wide range of pupils and meets their needs in full is being realised because of a combination of great staff commitment and outstanding management. This school is probably unique in the range of needs it meets within a mainstream educational setting and its vision is still alive and growing, with further provision planned for next year.
43. The school monitors its own performance very closely, through analysis of data, checking pupils' progress, checking the quality of teaching and learning, of planning and of pupils' work. The thoroughness and extent of monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators is very unusual and leads to a culture of valuing and developing skills and one in which staff accept the identification of areas for improvement. It also leads to staff becoming expert in their own subject areas. All this contributes to a school culture of rigorous self-appraisal and evaluation in which complacency has no part. It is truly a 'learning school'.
44. The leadership and management of special educational needs in the mainstream part of the school are very good as too is that for those few pupils from minority ethnic groups. The co-ordinator is conscientious, efficient and very well informed not only about the needs of the pupils and the management of special educational needs but also about local and national initiatives. The provision is organised very well. Teaching assistants have weekly meetings with class teachers, the co-ordinator meets regularly with the special needs support teacher and half-termly with all class teachers and assistants. The impact of these routines is that everyone is fully informed about those pupils who have special educational needs. This is reflected in the quality of teaching, and pupils achieve very well.
45. The school development plan provides a detailed review of development for the previous year and a detailed set of Management Priorities for the coming year. The plan provided a clear summary of review and development priorities for each subject, with funding implications made clear. It is backed up by detailed action plans and is complemented by the school's clear financial projections that enable a strategic view to be taken of development. An example of the school's drive for improvement lies in the action plan produced after the previous inspection. Having been given no key issues for action, an OFSTED action plan was not needed but the school went through the report 'with a fine-tooth comb' and addressed every small matter that suggested the need for improvement.
46. Governance of the school is very good. Governors are ably led by a knowledgeable chair of governors. As at the time of the previous inspection, the governing body is strongly committed to the school's success. Governors are understandably very proud that the school's work with pupils with severe special educational needs is to be extended further by the addition of a new

unit for autistic pupils. Governors share a common vision and support the headteacher and staff very well as they work to improve the learning opportunities for the pupils. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and act as a critical friend. Governors are fully involved in planning, prioritising and costing targets in the school improvement plan. They have a very good understanding of the recent work of the school through regular reports from the headteacher. Governors also receive further information from members of the Senior Management Team and subject leaders. They take a long-term view of school development, ably advised by the headteacher. Almost all statutory requirements are met apart from a small number of relatively omissions from the governors' annual report sent out to parents.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,132,332	Balance from previous year	172,085
Total expenditure	998,313	Balance carried forward to the next	134,019
Expenditure per pupil	3,774		

47. The figures in the above table include the resourced classes for pupils with special educational needs. As such, they are not comparable with figures for primary schools nationally. School data indicate that when only pupils in mainstream classes are included in financial information, expenditure per pupil is around £2550 and hence it is below average. The governing body takes great care to get best value from spending decisions. In this it is helped by the excellent financial management of the headteacher. The school is managing a significant but diminishing annual underspend on its budget but this is targeted carefully at improving and broadening provision. For example, this year's surplus will contribute towards the building of the second class for pupils with autism. Given the high quality of its provision, its efficiency and the very good achievement of its pupils, the school gives very good value for money.

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### What is the effectiveness of resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs?

Resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- An excellent ethos of inclusion and integration.
- Support and guidance are excellent.
- Very good leadership and management.
- Consistently very good teaching for pupils with speech and language difficulties.
- Accommodation for autistic pupils is too small.

#### Commentary

48. The school is very unusual in having five resourced special needs classes within the mainstream primary provision. The resourced classes cater for around 50 pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties encompassing autism, speech and language difficulties, moderate learning and behaviour difficulties. Pupils are referred from other schools and the local authority handles admission procedures. The provision has developed and changed since the last inspection and continues to be very good.
49. All pupils in the resourced classes follow the national curriculum adapted for their particular needs. An advantage of the classes being part of the whole school is that staff are able to liaise and share expertise. This is a two-way process with mainstream teachers gaining a good understanding of the special needs of the pupils in the resourced classes and special needs teachers maintaining a very good overview of mainstream curriculum requirements so their pupils do not miss out on curricular experiences.
50. Inclusion is excellent. The school is fortunate in having the resourced classes combined with the mainstream provision. This means that staff can organise integration of pupils from the classes into the mainstream classes on a very individual basis: some younger pupils initially just for ten minutes, other pupils for particular subjects or social times and a significant number of pupils working full-time within the mainstream classes. The success of integration is due to very good organisation, sensitive management and the excellent co-operation between the teachers and assistants in both sections of the school. The school is rightly very proud of this success and the pupils blossom, achieving very well in making the transition from the resourced classes to the mainstream classes.
51. Teaching is very good. In particular the teaching in both classes for pupils who have speech and language difficulties is consistently very good. A high level of attention is given to enabling pupils to think about words, adults are patient and persistent, encouraging progress but removing any pressure that would inhibit pupils. Adults work as a team, they have very high expectations that pupils will do their best, relationships are very good and pupils feel secure and therefore able to learn. The classrooms are stimulating, with key vocabulary on view and pupils' work such as portraits in the style of Picasso and data analysis on hair and eye colour proudly displayed. The speech and language therapist who works closely with staff and pupils further enhances the work of the teachers.
52. Teaching of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties is very good. An appropriate emphasis is placed on motivational awards and the pupils are very enthusiastic, keen for each other to achieve well. Staff are skilled at using the system to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Pupils are aware of their targets for development and show a commitment to managing and improving their behaviour. After activities pupils give a 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' to show they have thought about their attitudes and behaviour and have assessed their own progress. This is an essential skill needed for their transfer into a mainstream class. As

well as studying the National Curriculum, these pupils have additional work to help them benefit from the school provision. Short sessions in anger management are successful in helping pupils identify feelings and appropriate behaviour. The daily fifteen minute 'ABC' session is an exercise programme based on good analysis of pupils' educational needs, focusing on improving co-operative skills and co-ordination. Pupils enjoy the activities and become prepared and alert, ready for the next lesson.

53. Teaching for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties is good. Pupils are provided with a rich and stimulating curriculum based on the national curriculum. Any disruptive behaviour is managed calmly and the teaching assistant provides very good support. Relationships in the class are very good. Despite some hesitancy and lack of pace in some of the teaching, pupils achieve well. They enjoy practical activities such as predicting the origin of water samples and talking about feelings and responsibilities during circle time activities. The safe environment provided by the resourced provision gives pupils confidence, for example, to read in front of each other and prepares them well for integration into mainstream classes.
54. The resourced class for autistic pupils is the newest development. The school has made a very good start. Staff have embraced the challenge, working closely with outside agencies such as 'Autism Initiatives' to help develop appropriate teaching strategies. The unit is well staffed and all adults work effectively as a team, encouraging pupils to learn to communicate through symbolic vocabulary. Teaching is good. Staff are implementing the advice given by 'Autism Initiatives' and developing their own skills in managing pupils who have restricted communication and who can present challenging behaviour. All pupils have an individual workstation to enable them to learn to follow routines and concentrate on tasks. However, the size of the classroom is too small for eight pupils and five adults to easily follow the requirements of the recommended methodology. Despite the efforts of staff to make the classroom free from distractions, the room is cluttered because of the need for tables and chairs for group activities leaving insufficient space for easy movement. This inhibits the impact of the teaching because adults have to manoeuvre round furniture to engage in one-to-one interactions with pupils. The commitment to inclusion is evident. The whole class is integrated during lunchtime and playtimes with two pupils starting to attend the mainstream classes for group activities.
55. Assessment procedures are very good. Teachers in all five resourced classes make very detailed assessment of pupils' learning needs and use the information to plan their lessons and help pupils achieve their personal targets. Adults work very effectively as a team. The excellent support, care and guidance they give to pupils encourages them to gain in self-esteem, build up confidence and develop good relationships with pupils in the rest of the school. As a result pupils in the resourced classes achieve very well.
56. Leadership, management and day-to-day organisation of the special needs resourced classes are very good. The deputy head with responsibility for whole-school provision for special educational needs is an experienced and very good practitioner. She is very clear-sighted and fully committed to the ethos of inclusion. The work of the resourced classes is closely monitored to ensure pupils make the required progress. Teachers and assistants are given good opportunities to develop new skills through training. It is evident that the school is committed to doing the best for each pupil and encourages them to develop into happy and fulfilled individuals. Very good links are made with parents and with a range of support networks to help pupils to make successful transitions between classes and into the next stage of their education.

### **What is the effectiveness of community provision?**

Community provision is **very good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school undertakes very successfully a wide range of community focused activities.
- These have a positive impact upon the work of the school as well as benefiting the local community.

## **Commentary**

57. The school is rightly proud of its partnership with the local and wider community. It has undertaken a number of initiatives to help parents and local residents to develop their numeracy, literacy and ICT skills. Parents' self-confidence was increased by 'Parents as Educators' courses and as a result many, mothers especially, are undertaking higher qualifications, with some now working in the school. In addition, the school also organises adult education classes on the premises, holds workshops for parents in Literacy and Numeracy and for the parents of autistic pupils. As a result of the school's productive relationships within the community, there has been no problem in recruiting highly effective, committed governors who have undertaken a range of training and are now used as role models by the Local Education Authority.
58. There have been a number of authority initiatives which benefited the school more than most because of the school's willingness to go 'that extra mile' to make things work well. A lasting legacy is the 'Fun4Kids' initiative, an after school club based on the school site, which provides considerable benefit for parents and pupils not only after school but also in the school holidays. With the help of the new site manager, the school is hoping to develop a football club based on the school grounds to provide a further community facility and to prevent damage to more unsuitable areas where young people presently play football. This is in addition to the agreement that part of the school grounds can be used after school and in the holidays. Members of the community are happily prepared to undertake work for the school helping with, for example, school productions, the annual Garden Party and creating the school garden.

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

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

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

- The overall philosophy of promoting social skills and independence is successful.
- Children achieve very well in the nursery and reception classes.
- Teaching is consistently very good.
- Classes in the Foundation Stage are very well resourced.

#### **Commentary**

59. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children start in the nursery class with well below average attainment but most leave reception having achieved the expected levels for their age. All groups of children achieve very well because of consistently very good teaching that shows the following strengths:
- very good teamwork between teachers and support staff;
  - very effective planning that shows a good balance between adult led and child initiated activities across the different areas of learning;
  - in both nursery and reception, the philosophy of encouraging children to become independent learners is central to planning, resulting in very good opportunities for all children to investigate and experiment - some children are barely three years of age when they start but staff are knowledgeable and flexible in encouraging children to participate and in standing back to allow individuals to learn at their own pace;
  - relationships in both classes are very good - children are very happy and enjoy the wide range of learning experiences provided for them.
60. The quality of accommodation is very good, enabling children to move around freely and learn actively from their surroundings. Best use is made of resources, including toys, computers and the two outdoor play areas. Parents are welcomed into the school and encouraged to support their children through information meetings, the Home Lending Library and workshops led by the Foundation Stage manager. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. They are based on very good understanding and experience of the learning needs of young children. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

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

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

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

- Very high priority is given to this area of learning and this strong focus results in very effective provision.
- Teaching and learning are very good and result in very good achievement.
- The very good relationships in both classes make a strong contribution to learning.

#### **Commentary**

61. Most children start in the nursery with well below average skills in personal, social and emotional development but all attain the expected levels by the time they leave reception. Staff appreciate that children cannot progress effectively in other areas of learning unless they became confident and independent within the classroom. A curriculum based upon good understanding of the way young children learn gives nursery children a very good start and the

slightly more formal approach in the reception class prepares them well for the next stage of learning.

62. Teachers plan challenging activities to make children interested, excited and keen to learn. Through very good care and support, children increase in confidence, joining in to speak as part of a group. For example, nursery children excitedly discussed the parts they would take later in the week when they were to re-enact a story, and reception children chatted enthusiastically about emergency vehicles.
63. Children know they must listen when someone is speaking. Adults give a very good example, listening to what children have to say and showing their contributions are valued. They relate very well to children, expecting them to behave well and work hard as part of the class or group, taking turns and sharing fairly. Good development of personal independence is seen in different ways, for example, in nursery children selecting their own name for registration and reception children selecting their activities and resources and tidying up their own equipment.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good and result in very good achievement.
- Speaking and listening are given high priority, strongly influencing the development of these skills.

### **Commentary**

64. The school has made a conscious decision to focus on improving children's confidence in speaking and listening and all children achieve the expected levels by the end of reception despite low starting points in the nursery. This priority, combined with the emphasis on personal development, means that whilst most children achieve the expected levels in the skills of speaking and listening, a significant minority are below expectation in some aspects of reading and writing although they still make very good progress and achieve very well. The school feels that children should become confident and independent and that other skills will develop later, and teachers in the Foundation Stage are very successful in achieving this.
65. Imaginative play is an important element of the provision and both classes contain stimulating dressing up areas that children enjoy, helping them develop their skills of speaking and listening as well as their social skills. Throughout the day, staff use these opportunities very effectively to promote such skills, talking with children, asking them questions and encouraging them to express themselves. Very good opportunities are provided for children to learn to write. Children are well aware of the use of writing to convey information. Higher attaining children in reception write in sentences and pupils with lower attainment begin to form the letters of their name. Children talk confidently about their ideas. All children enjoy story-time and learn well from it. For example, as a result of lively reading and questioning by the assistant nursery children enthusiastically predicted what might happen next in the story being told to them.
66. In preparation for studying the National Curriculum in Year 1, reception children work effectively in small groups, recognising key words in their reading books and answering questions, with higher attaining children reading their books without adult help. In the reception class, children have homework every night to reinforce the reading and writing skills taught that day. The regularity of the homework, combined with parental support, contributes to children's very good achievement overall.



## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good, contributing to very good achievement.
- The school provides a very good range of accessible resources for counting, sorting and ordering.

### Commentary

67. In the nursery, children use a wide range of very appropriate resources to help them develop mathematical ideas. Display in the classroom shows they have an awareness of 'tallest' and 'smallest'. Imaginative teaching linked with a familiar story helps children to improve their number skills up to ten when they count cookies from *Red Riding Hood's* basket. Reception children make very good progress, enjoying counting together in ones, tens and fives. Very good use is made of computer programs and the computerised whiteboard to help children understand the connection between counting on and back with addition and subtraction. Children start the nursery year with well below average attainment. They achieve very well, gaining in confidence throughout the Foundation Stage. As a result, many are on target to achieve the expected levels by the time they leave reception.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and result in very good achievement.
- Classrooms contain a wealth of interesting and accessible resources for children to investigate.

### Commentary

68. When children start in the nursery class, they mostly have limited general knowledge. Teachers and support staff successfully set up experiences that help to overcome these shortcomings and provide children with exciting and motivating ideas. Children achieve very well and reach the expected levels by the time they leave Reception because they receive very good quality teaching from the whole team of adults who work with them.
69. Learning is related to real events. For example, children have explored the life cycle of a butterfly from caterpillar stage to release in the garden and know that living things, including themselves, change as they grow. Staff make very good use of the attached play areas, for example when children became 'gardeners' to plant seeds. In good links with literacy, nursery children discussed imaginatively what their 'magic' beans might grow into. Reception children know about the changes in weather and are able to select the appropriate clothes for sunny, wet or windy days. Children use ICT effectively to support their work in literacy and numeracy.
70. The early skills of design and technology are developed very well through a range of practical activities including the use of building and construction toys, making soup and gingerbread men and decorating biscuits. Children gain an understanding of features of the area immediately around them when they record by drawing what they saw on their 'Spring Walk' and they learn to use simple maps. Their awareness of the wider world is promoted well through the school's links with China, with children in reception having learnt to say their colours and numbers in Mandarin Chinese. Within the philosophy of the Foundation Stage, this

rich range of experiences stimulates children's curiosity and encourages them to talk, thus promoting the development of skills in speaking and listening.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good use is made of the outside play areas.
- Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards in physical development are slightly below average when children start at the school, with many children already adept at skills such as moving the cursor on the computer screen. The Foundation Stage is very well resourced with two large classrooms and easy access to adjoining grassed and hard surface play areas. These provides very good opportunities for children to play on wheeled toys and to move around both inside and outside, learning to share toys, take turns and investigate the environment. Children have very good opportunities to cut and stick, sew and make a wide range of models. Those in the nursery class understand the routine for moving from their classroom to the hall for music and movement sessions and although the less mature are initially a little overwhelmed, with support they join in the songs. Children are on target to achieve the expected levels at the end of reception.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well.
- Very effective emphasis is placed on developing children's imagination.

### **Commentary**

72. All children are on target to achieve the expected levels by the end of the Reception class. Throughout the day, staff organise a good range of colour mixing and creative activities, matching colours, selecting stickers, sequins or ribbons for their work, making bubble pictures and exploring the texture of shaving foam and modelling clay. Art programs on the computer are used effectively for children to improve manipulative skills and to develop their imagination. Teachers display work well, showing how children create attractive collage pictures. Throughout practical activities, staff encourage children to discuss what they are creating and help them take pride in their work. This has a good influence on children's personal development and on their ability to think about what they are doing, to consider their choices carefully and feel confident about their own skills.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 national test results in 2003 were the highest ever achieved by the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in Years 1, 2 and 6. As a result, pupils achieve well.
- The writing of pupils in Years 3 to 5 is sometimes carelessly spelled and punctuated, and poorly presented.
- The subject is very well led and managed and has very good systems of self-evaluation and action planning.
- Teachers mark work very well and set targets that tell pupils what they must do to improve.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and those from minority ethnic groups, are very well provided for through the high quality teamwork of teaching and support staff, and pupils from the resourced classes are successfully included in lessons as appropriate.

#### Commentary

73. Standards have risen over the past four years but are currently just below average because some weaknesses in writing persist. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and this is reflected in last year's test results. The percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected level was higher than at the time of the last inspection and very close to the national average although weaker in writing than reading. Inspection evidence and the school's own records indicate that the current Year 6 pupils are not likely to reach this standard despite very good teaching during the year. Results at Year 2 in 2003 were well below national averages but standards of reading and writing at Year 1 and Year 2 are now much closer to national averages although still below those to be expected of most seven-year-olds.
74. Pupils start school with well below average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Standards in speaking and listening are a little below average in Years 1 and 2 but average in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are more confident than at the time of the last inspection in speaking out in more formal situations and contribute ideas and opinions very readily in lessons. This is because teachers include opportunities for speaking and listening, such as imaginative play, 'hot-seating' or the use of puppets, in their planning.
75. Standards in reading have risen to be broadly average. A significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 and 2 are likely to lower national test results even though this group make very good progress. However, the majority of pupils in Year 2 are well launched into reading. They achieve well because of:
- group reading lessons set apart from the daily literacy lesson that promote fuller concentration and more direct teaching of skills;
  - good systems of home and school readers and records that involve parents in their children's reading;
  - strong teaching of the link between letters and sounds so that pupils can tackle unfamiliar words by breaking the words down in separate sounds;
  - very good teaching in Year 1, most especially for those pupils who struggle with the early stages of learning to read.
76. Pupils in Year 6 have some difficulty with 'reading between the lines' to infer and deduce from what they read but this is improving because of the better-organised guided reading sessions and the use of reading journals. By the end of Year 6, pupils are not sophisticated readers but they are developing preferences for different authors. They can discuss nuances of plot or

characters and begin to explain how authors create effects. They say how they appreciate the adventurous and up-to-date collection of children's literature in the library as well as events such as World Book Week that promote reading for pleasure.

77. Teachers have worked hard to raise the standard of writing and are having success although the challenge remains. Pupils achieve well from a low starting point and reach just below average standards in Years 2 and 6. Work in pupils' books across the school shows the impact of very effective measures designed to raise standards. Key measures are:
- analysis of test results, outcomes shared with all teachers and well focussed improvement strategies for groups and individuals;
  - very effective staff training in the most recent techniques of teaching writing to groups and whole classes;
  - a flexible approach to timetabling reading and writing so that teaching assistants and additional teachers can be deployed most effectively;
  - rigorous assessment, marking and target setting to help pupils learn how to improve.
78. As a result, Year 1 pupils have developed an encouragingly firm grasp of basic sentence structure and punctuation, and confidence in using their phonic knowledge to attempt to spell more difficult words. Average and higher attaining pupils in Year 2 write more complex sentences and longer, properly organised stories and other imaginative writing. Their writing is very close to the expected standard although class averages may be lower in national testing because of a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
79. Year 6 pupils build up their skills at a very good rate, particularly in assembling carefully structured paragraphs and properly connected sentences in a range of writing forms. The improvement is less marked in Years 3-5 because teachers are not consistent in expecting the highest standards of spelling, handwriting and punctuation. Although pupils use more ambitious sentence structures, they too often forget to use punctuation to separate or control them.
80. In lessons seen, teaching was good overall and very good in Year 1, 2 and 6. All teachers use the school's high quality resources well, especially computerised whiteboards and the generous space available in most classrooms. Lessons are lively and interesting so that pupils enjoy their learning and work very hard in school and with their homework. Teachers plan so that teaching teams can work effectively with different attainment groups to meet their needs. They have used good techniques so that pupils can see how writing should be structured. Pupils from the resourced classes who are being re-integrated into mainstream provision receive very good support so that they take part fully in lessons and also make good progress in social adjustment to a different setting.
81. The subject is very well led and managed by the two subject leaders. They contribute to several teaching teams, so that their influence is well felt. They analyse test results rigorously, track pupils' progress efficiently and monitor work on a regular basis. They work well with staff to put improvements into practice.

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

82. Provision is satisfactory. Pupils use their reading and writing skills appropriately in other lessons and links between English and subjects such as history, geography, and science and design technology are formalised through medium term planning. The school's approach to planning its provision in the humanities around a single theme leads to effective links with English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average in problem solving and pupils show good skills in this aspect.
- In lessons, pupils' achievement is excellent in Year 2 and good in Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good overall across the school and particularly strong in Years 2 and 6.
- Very good leadership by the subject co-ordinator is having a positive impact on standards.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers' unsatisfactory class management results in a small number of pupils not making best use of time.

### **Commentary**

83. The results of the 2003 national tests were above average compared with similar schools, when the performance of only pupils in mainstream classes is measured, but were below average when compared with all schools nationally. Inspection findings show that standards this year are broadly average, with achievement being good overall. This improvement is due to good use of assessment and data analysis in order to provide work that matches closely to pupils' learning needs. Pupils are confident with solving practical mathematical problems, for example, when learning about money. As a result, they make good use of enquiry and investigative skills in other situations and this enhances their learning, resulting in above average standards in this aspect.
84. Most pupils achieve well, particularly when teachers have clear and high expectations for all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well through the effective support of the classroom assistants. Most teachers provide challenging work or specific timescales that encourage pupils to maintain their concentration and try their best. This results in good achievement.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is particularly high-quality teaching in Years 2 and 6. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and question sharply to encourage pupils to think a problem through. In the best lessons, teachers are highly-skilled in targeting questions at specific pupils in order to challenge all levels of attainment. Teachers are particularly effective in setting their pupils practical problems which involve using their knowledge of number and other mathematical concepts. This introduces an element of fun into the lessons and results in the pupils attempting work enthusiastically and with an increasingly logical approach.
86. Occasionally, teachers do not reinforce their initial expectations well enough and weakness in class management skills results in a small number of pupils wasting time. In these circumstances, which are in the minority, the overall level of pupils' learning and achievement is reduced, being only satisfactory in general.
87. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She provides very good leadership, monitors teaching and learning well and is beginning to formally analyse strengths and weaknesses across the subject. She makes good use of the school's assessment systems to ensure pupils are provided with appropriate strategies to help them improve. Overall, her leadership has a positive impact on standards and has ensured that there has been a good improvement in provision since the previous inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

88. Overall, satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support other areas of the curriculum. Good links are made with the ICT curriculum, particularly in the use of data handling and

spreadsheets, and graphs and charts are used in science work. However, only limited use is made of mathematics to support other subjects.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The organisation of the timetable for science provides a very good framework for teaching the curriculum rigorously.
- The school has a very strong and very effective approach to teaching science through investigation.
- The way in which teachers and support staff work together is very effective, leading to productive learning during lessons.
- The school's commitment to including all pupils in lessons works very well in science.
- Very effective leadership and management is characterised by a strong and effective focus on checking and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

### Commentary

89. The school's great success in science is due to major strengths in provision allied to good, and sometimes very good, teaching and very good subject leadership. It has resulted in very good improvements since the previous inspection, with standards last year being well above average when compared to similar schools nationally (once national test data has been adjusted to take account of the school's special profile for the integration of pupils with significant special educational needs). Over the past five years, the school has moved from below the national average to above it. Last year all mainstream pupils taking the national tests attained at least the expected level, with nearly half attaining the higher level. Inspection findings indicate that standards at Year 2 are average and that those at Year 6 are above average. All groups of pupils achieve very well throughout the school. This is due to several key factors:
- the school has organised its timetable so that science receives above average time allocations and is provided with significant periods of time for individual lessons;
  - It has also adopted an approach that teaching and learning in science should be led by investigation and observation. The curriculum is planned rigorously with this in mind. Teachers then plan lessons thoroughly to ensure that the approach happens in practice. Their high expectations ensure that the work provided challenges all groups of pupils;
  - very good relationships between adults and pupils underpin the learning and ensure a very productive climate for learning;
  - the quality, amount and organisation of adult support in lessons means that pupils are supported very well in their learning and that they are constantly challenged to learn. Teaching assistants are very well informed about their work and show great confidence in helping pupils. They help to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve at least well in lessons. In Year 6, this organisation of staffing reaches its peak, with three teachers and a support assistant allowing four groups of pupils to engage closely in investigation. This results in a highly effective environment for learning in which pupils work very productively in groups where levels of attainment are mixed. They achieve very well;
  - the deployment and quality of adult assistance also means that pupils with special educational needs, both in the mainstream classes and those being included from the resourced provision, are very well supported and achieve to their capabilities;
  - the very good quality of resources provides pupils with the tools for investigation;
  - a rigorous approach to improvement means that higher standards are always being sought. The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and monitors teaching and learning closely and regularly. As a result, issues for improvement are identified and addressed.

Support and training for staff are of high quality. There is a very evident desire to continue to improve.

90. Whilst pupils' achievement in lessons was mostly good, the evidence of achievement in exercise books points unmistakably to 'very good'. In every book sampled in every year group a significantly large amount of work was evident, largely relating to scientific investigation, and most was of very good quality. Pupils develop the skills of prediction and hypothesis. They learn to test fairly and record the results of their investigations accurately in a variety of forms.
91. The school's very strong commitment to the inclusion in lessons of pupils with high levels of special educational needs is very evident in science. Pupils take part in whole lessons or in parts of lessons as appropriate. Very good support for these pupils means that they gain a great deal both in learning subject skills and socially from such occasions. The value to other pupils' personal and social development is also evident in the way in which all pupils are accepted naturally as part of the class community.
92. The expression of findings through graphs and tables indicates particularly strong links with numeracy and ICT. The effectiveness of links with literacy is not so strong, with pupils' below average skills of writing sometimes preventing them from expressing their findings well, especially in Years 3 to 5. Presentation of work is sometimes not as good as it should be. Teachers mark work regularly and in some cases to a very high standard, challenging pupils to think further about their answers and not letting go until a good response has been made. However, not all marking is of this high standard, showing some inconsistency in practice.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources are excellent and this strongly influences pupils' attitudes and achievement.
- The school's commitment to developing teachers' skills and confidence is evident in the successful teaching of subject skills.
- The curriculum for ICT is effectively focused on developing and practising skills.
- Good links are being developed between ICT and other subjects.

### **Commentary**

93. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching, a well-structured curriculum and excellent resources. The school received a very positive report following its previous inspection and it has made good improvement since that time, making good use of the resources it has acquired and the training that staff have undertaken. Standards match those expected nationally, being average at Year 2 and Year 6.
94. A strong feature of the teaching, and of pupils' learning, is the way in which lessons often start with a whole-class session around the computerised whiteboards that are in each class. Teachers share with pupils the focus for each lesson's learning and then use the whiteboards to provide compelling demonstrations of the skills to be learnt, often involving pupils in the process. The quality of this resource and its good use mean that pupils are eager to learn. When pupils practise and develop their skills in the computer room, their success is aided by the way in which they have been taught how to work co-operatively. The presence of additional adult support in all lessons means that good attention is given to supporting different levels of learning need.
95. Although observation of teaching was limited in Years 3 to 6 because of the school's timetable, the progress seen through pupils' work and through talking to pupils indicates good

achievement and good quality of teaching. Occasionally, teaching is very good when the teacher works very creatively to involve pupils practically in data collecting and recording exercises. As a result, pupils are enthused to achieve very well.

96. Work in ICT is now being planned systematically to enhance learning in other subjects and this is helped by the presence of two computers in each classroom, in addition to those housed in the computer suite. The suite itself is adequate but is a rather small and cramped space for a whole class. However, staff make the most of the facility. In all other ways, resources are excellent and are used very well to support learning, for example when Year 6 pupils used data loggers as part of an investigation into electrical circuits. The systematic way in which these resources have been acquired and the way in which they are matched to curricular needs owes much to the organisational skills of the subject co-ordinator, who provides good leadership, and to the skills of resource management of senior managers. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning closely and rigorously, providing good advice as a result of her observations. This, allied to staff's very strong commitment to the continual development of their skills through training, means that a firm focus on improvement is maintained.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

97. Very strong, planned links have already been established in some subjects whilst in others the process is developing well. The quality of planned links in science is particularly strong but the school has shown good recognition of the wider curriculum by prioritising music and personal, social and health education for similar development. Good use of computers for various aspects of data analysis and presentation is evident throughout the school. Pupils also make good use of computers to present their work in English and to integrate several subjects into an overall presentation.

### **HUMANITIES**

98. No overall judgements on provision or teaching in **history** or **geography** can be made as history was not taught during the inspection and it was possible to observe only one geography lesson. However, other inspection evidence shows that the curriculum is well planned. A distinctive feature is the clustering of history, geography and religious education within a termly theme, with a key focus for each subject in one term per year. This allows for links to be made between the three subjects, and also with subjects such as English, mathematics and ICT. A good example of this is the work in Year 5, where a geographical study of India encompasses an exploration of Hinduism as a key world faith. Planning formalises this expectation and resources support it, particularly in English and ICT. For instance, a priority for the history subject leader during this year has been to increase the number of Big Books for use in literacy lessons. The special needs unit classes plan in a similar way, but follow an adapted three-year cycle to ensure coverage without repetition.
99. The timetable system facilitates thorough coverage of each theme, and this was noted in the work sampled during the inspection. In work seen in history and geography, pupils' skills were average. In history for example, pupils in Year 2 put the events of the Great Fire of London in the correct order, and annotate illustrations accurately. They write accounts of how Florence Nightingale fought for better sanitation in the hospitals, and show good moral understanding of how people can give of their best to help others. By Year 6, pupils build up a good knowledge of the Ancient Greeks, and can interrogate different types of evidence to find out how the Greek people lived. From looking at Greek vases, they find out about games played at the Olympics, and about the roles people play in society. This skill can be traced back through Year 5, as pupils study pictures of Viking helmets and shields and interpret their use; and interrogate web-sites to depict a Roman villa. Additional books to help with historical research have recently been purchased to further support independent research.



100. In geography, there is a very appropriate emphasis upon first hand experience and field-work and environmental education. For instance, Year 1 develop their mapping skills in the immediate locality of the school; Year 4 visit Southport as part of a home region study; and Year 6's river study will include river study activities in Croxteth Park. There are very good plans to link up with a range of environmental projects. Pupils also undertake field-work as part of residential visits.
101. Both the subject leaders are teachers within the resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. As a result, a strong feature of both subjects is the careful consideration given to the curriculum and particular needs of the pupils within the special educational needs unit classes. The two subject leaders pay careful attention to resource provision for these classes and to including the pupils with special educational needs in site visits, field work and environmental walks: further evidence of the school's commitment to including all pupils in the mainstream of curriculum provision.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory** with good features.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well, and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are at the expected levels.
- The school's timetable arrangements provide well for developing knowledge and understanding.
- Good links to other subjects increase the subject's relevance and meaning for pupils.
- Pupils have good opportunities to build up understanding of world faiths.
- Sometimes, opportunities to develop knowledge and awareness are missed.

## **Commentary**

102. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have a sound grasp of world faiths. They can identify religious practices and ceremonies and festivals associated with Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Because a weekly lesson is devoted to the life of Jesus, pupils in Years 1 to 6 know about the stories that Jesus told and about key events in his life.
103. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features; occasionally it is very good. Teachers use a variety of original ways of linking key ideas to their pupils' everyday experiences and plan creatively in order to make the introduction to lessons interesting. As a result, pupils are receptive to key ideas and make good gains in learning. For example, in an introductory lesson to 'special books' in religious faiths the teacher shared with Year 4 pupils a photograph album of her own childhood, so that they readily accepted and understood the concept of a special or holy text. The two co-ordinators are extending the resources for religious education, including the use of ICT and this is adding to the pupils' willingness to learn. For example, Year 3 pupils responded well to a 'virtual reality' church visit on video/CD ROM, and built up a fair knowledge of the features of a Christian church.
104. The co-ordinators have revised the school's curriculum plan in order to ensure full coverage of world faiths, making sure that the teaching builds upon what pupils already know. As a result, a world religion becomes a key theme for one term in three of each teaching year. This means that pupils have time to study each religion in some depth, for a concentrated period of time. Good links are made to other subjects so that pupils begin to understand the significance of religion and culture in relation to time and place. Teachers make good use of local resources such as the local church and synagogue so that pupils come to understand the symbolism of features of worship and religious artefacts.
105. Religious education contributes well to pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and to personal and social development. During a good lesson in Year 6, pupils developed feelings of empathy and compassion for younger pupils who might join the school as a new pupil, through

comparing this to their transition to secondary education in a few weeks' time. Some opportunities for deepening pupils' knowledge and awareness are not grasped when discussions are not developed as well as they could be. However, great sensitivity in leading discussion was evident in a Year 1 lesson and led to very evident deepening of pupils' awareness of their feelings about life.

106. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leaders are steadily improving resources and give good support to year group planning teams through newly assembled resource packages and suggested activities. Assessment is better than found in many schools and means that improvement since the previous inspection is good. The subject leaders monitor lessons and keep the subject constantly under review and have a keen sense of how the subject should develop.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

107. Only one lesson in **art and design** was observed and no overall judgements can be made about provision or teaching. However, an analysis of pupils' work in sketch-books and on display around the school indicates an overall high quality of work with attainment being above average and achievement being good. In sketch-books, pupils' skills are developing well, particularly in observational drawing and in designs based on other artists such as William Morris. Classroom displays show a range of skills and materials being used, for example, weaving, sewing and observational drawings, pencil and crayon drawings of monsters, collage and some good use of art software to produce African Sunset pictures. This evidence indicates that the high standards noted in the previous inspection have been maintained. Pupils' work is displayed with great care and sensitivity by the school. This helps pupils to take a pride in their work and strive to continually improve their composition.
108. In the one lesson observed, very good teaching, learning and achievement took place. Good cross-curricular links were made, as pupils took digital photographs, enlarged a section of their photograph using a grid and then developed this initial drawing of the image in the style of Mondrian or Klee. Some pupils painted their picture and others further extended the original idea by taking the abstract element further. Pupils were very well advised on materials and technique. As a result, many were completely absorbed in their work.
109. Only one lesson in **design and technology** was observed and no overall judgements can be made about provision and teaching. However, evidence of work available indicates average standards and satisfactory achievement. Findings from the previous indicated that, in some classes in Years 3 to 6, pupils' skills were not systematically developed. Curriculum provision is now satisfactory and includes appropriate development of pupils' skills in design and making, including those linked to food technology. This indicates good improvement since the previous inspection. Although all classes design a model before constructing it, there is inconsistent evidence of evaluation and modification of their models. Some very good practice was evident in Year 2, where pupils have made a booklet about their project, which includes design criteria, resources needed, sewing practice, making a paper template, how to make my puppet and an evaluation. However, this good structure is not evident in many other classes.
110. In the one lesson observed, good links were made with a previous story about Joseph's coloured coat. Pupils understood the objectives of the lesson and were able to say how well they felt they had done at the end of the lesson. Good teaching of specific skills, such as sewing using a running stitch, helped pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
111. Very little work in **music** was observed during the inspection and so no judgements can be made on provision, standards or teaching. Pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically during assembly. Audio tapes of their performance indicate that this quality is carried through into singing lessons. The school's musical production, just before Christmas, gives evidence of the value of music, along with other performance arts, as a means of expressing a sense of joyful

community. In the one lesson observed, pupils in Year 3 improved their ability to keep a rhythm whilst the tempo of a song changed. Planning shows that the school provides a full curriculum.

112. The co-ordinator monitors both planning and the quality of teaching and learning. She does this with great thoroughness, providing useful advice for teachers through her written reports on lessons observed. The level of subject monitoring is far greater than in many schools and indicates the seriousness of the school's approach to providing its pupils with a broad, skills-based curriculum. Although the work of visiting specialists was not observed directly, it is clear that the school's investment in this extra provision is paying off. Pupils were heard to play keyboards skilfully and to improve their playing under careful tuition. The very good quality and the number of keyboards available contributed strongly to this success.
113. Very few lessons were observed in **physical education** and no overall judgement about provision, standards and teaching can be made. The standard of achievement in the lessons seen was above that found in most schools and teaching was very good overall.
114. Pupils enjoy lessons, display positive attitudes and try hard to improve their skills. They apply these skills enthusiastically in small team settings, for example, when playing rounders in a screened off area in the playground and playing fairly. In one lesson involving pupils from one of the special needs units they confidently build up their repertoire of movements to establish a sequence based on the lyrics from 'Singing in the rain'. In other lessons observed, an outstanding feature was the way that pupils from the special educational needs units were successfully included in all activities. Very good teaching ensures that the pace of lessons is brisk, with the pupils being challenged to improve on their previous best. Extra-curricular activities enhance learning. The school's resources are very good and easily accessible and the scheme of work is planned well and provides very good guidance.

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

115. Insufficient lessons were seen to support an overall judgement on provision or teaching. A well-written policy and scheme of work ensures that knowledge and understanding are developed progressively as pupils move through the school. The school provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn respect for the values and beliefs of others, and to develop their own self-worth and confidence. Issues to do with sex and relationships, drugs and health education are planned well into the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibility. For example, at playtimes playground 'buddies' keep watchful eyes on all that happens.
116. The school views pupils' personal development as highly important and the outcomes of the school's approach can be clearly seen in very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Pupils learn that they can play an active part in citizenship, through activities such as being involved in the School Council and in the Sefton schools' parliament. The school participates in the Healthy School's scheme and is well on the way to full accreditation.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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