

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Formby, Merseyside

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104881

Headteacher: Mr Simon Grilli

Lead inspector: Mr Martin Kerly

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th May 2004

Inspection number: 258491

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	388
School address:	Woodlands Road Formby Liverpool Merseyside
Postcode:	L37 2JN
Telephone number:	(01704) 876 444
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Anita Aindow
Date of previous inspection:	1 st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Woodlands Primary School is a large primary school with 388 pupils on roll, 204 boys and 184 girls, aged four to 11 years, situated in the residential village of Formby. The school population is predominantly white British and very few pupils are eligible for free school meals (1.7 per cent, which is well below the national average). 10.4 per cent of the pupils, below the national average, have special learning needs but there are some with complex needs. The school serves an established area of private housing with a high proportion of parents from professional backgrounds. Parents are strongly committed to their children's education. When they first start school, the children's attainment is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12783	Martin Kerly	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education (PE) Personal, social and health education (PSHE)
9306	Barbara Moore	Lay inspector	
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11528	Michael Wainwright	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education (RE)
33083	Fran Johnson	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Woodlands Primary School is a very good school and provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well. They enter the school with above average attainment and many leave with standards that are well above average. The teaching is very effective and the school is led, managed and governed very well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above expected levels in English, mathematics, art and design and physical education, and above expectations in science, geography, history and religious education.
- Standards achieved in ICT are not high enough, although in line with national expectation.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and the children achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development and in language development.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve very well.
- Pupils are very well cared for; their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good.
- The headteacher is a very good leader; his deputy head supports him well.
- The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well and contribute significantly to the strategic direction of the school.

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 1998. It has successfully, addressed the weaknesses identified then, particularly by improving health and safety, the monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school, and the methods used to assess pupils' progress. There has been some improvement to the provision of ICT equipment, but more still needs to be done.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - exceptionally high; 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.*

Most pupils achieve well. Their above average attainment on entry to the school is built on well during the Foundation Stage, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and their language skills. Most children are likely to achieve national expectations by the end of the Reception Year, and some will exceed them. By Year 2, the pupils reach above average standards. The last Year 6 test results in English and mathematics were higher than those achieved in similar schools. By Year 6, the pupils attain either above or well above standards in almost all other subjects and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Only in ICT are standards not high enough, with too few pupils achieving to their potential.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and they behave very well. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good. The teaching is very effective. The teaching and learning is particularly strong in the junior years. Many teachers have very good subject knowledge, an enthusiasm for the subject and high expectations of their pupils. The pupils' very good speaking and listening skills and their very good attitudes have a very positive effect on their learning in all curriculum areas. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and their relationships with their pupils are very good. Teachers with parallel classes in each year group plan effectively together and this strengthens the overall quality of teaching and learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. ICT is not used sufficiently to support teaching and learning in other subjects.

Curriculum provision is good overall. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for all pupils and for those pupils with special educational needs provision is very good. Accommodation is very good. Resources are good for children in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for the pupils from Years 1 to 6. The school has very good procedures for the care, guidance and support of all pupils. Every pupil is valued equally and all are fully included in all experiences. The school has a good partnership with parents, though the annual reports to parents, whilst detailed, should provide more information about the standards their children achieve.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and the governance of the school is very good. The school is very well managed. The head leads the school very well. He has a clear vision for the school and high expectations of pupils and staff. The deputy head and special educational needs co-ordinator fulfil their roles very well and provide very good support to the overall leadership of the school. The Foundation Stage is well led and very successfully managed. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities most effectively and contributes very well to the overall strategic development of the school. It ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Both the leadership and management promote a strong commitment among all members of staff to include all pupils in everything the school offers : this is most successfully achieved.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views about the school. Relationships with parents are good and the overwhelming majority are positive about the school. A very small minority of parents expressed concerns about weak communication and poor responses to their children's particular needs. After substantial investigation, the inspectors could find nothing to substantiate these concerns. The pupils are very committed to and proud of their school. They feel valued and are clear about how their views have been taken into account.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing this very good school should do to improve further is:

- To improve the standards achieved in ICT.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The children's standards of attainment are **above national expectations** on entry to the school. They achieve **well** during their time in school so that standards are generally **well above national expectations** by the end of Years 2 and 6, particularly in English and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in art and design, history and aspects of physical education are also well above national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well during their time in school; those with special educational needs achieve particularly well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and almost all are likely to achieve or exceed the standards expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year.
- Standards in science, geography, history and religious education are all above national expectations.
- Standards in ICT, whilst generally in line with national expectations, are not high enough and many pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Commentary

1. At the time of the inspection, the most recently available published national tests for the end of Years 2 and 6 were from the summer of 2003. These results showed that standards attained in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 were above the national average, and broadly average compared with those in similar schools. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average and above similar schools. The table below shows that standards by the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average in science. In English and mathematics, these standards demonstrated very good achievement during the junior years, and in science, good achievement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.7	28.6 (28.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The upward trend in standards at the end of Year 2 was above the national trend, being most marked in mathematics. The trend at the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with the national trend with overall standards being maintained well above the national trend.

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age 11 is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

3. Pupils achieve well during their time in the school. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is above average and the school works effectively to enable children in the Foundation
4. Stage to achieve good standards of work. This is sustained throughout the school. Standards of work seen in English were above average in Key Stage 1 and well above average in Key Stage 2. The achievement of boys is very good, particularly in writing - in contrast to the national picture. In mathematics, the standard of the pupils' work is consistently very good throughout the school, and the pupils' achievement in the subject is good. The performance of boys is better than that of girls at the end of Year 6 but this is less pronounced lower down in the school. Standards in science are above average throughout the school, pupils achieve well in the subject and a high proportion of Year 6 pupils are reaching the higher Level 5 in national tests.
5. In history, geography, religious education, art and design and physical education, the work seen reveals standards that are above average. In these subjects, pupils achieve well and some very well. In history and art and design, for example, there is evidence of the more able pupils achieving high levels of attainment and in physical education, particularly swimming, the standards achieved are well above the national expectation. The pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) contrasts with the overall picture of good achievement. Standards in ICT at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those nationally and this does represent an improvement since the last inspection but, given the pupils' capabilities, it does represent a degree of underachievement in this subject.
6. All the pupils with special educational needs make very good progress with many of them achieving standards either in line with or just below expectations. Their success is due to the very effective support provided by teachers and teaching assistants and the extra programmes of work for literacy and numeracy. The more able, gifted and talented pupils are challenged effectively and consequently achieve very well. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress and achieve well.
7. The school ensures that pupils use their very good language and literacy skills effectively in all their subjects, in discussion, debate and in the variety of written tasks they are set across the curriculum. Pupils have confidence in the use of the computer keyboard, databases and the Internet to research their topics but there is insufficient planned opportunity to systematically develop their skills across the curriculum. Nevertheless, there are good and very good examples of effective use of ICT to support learning in subjects such as history and geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities and their behaviour are **very good**. Their attitudes and relationships are also **very good**. The social, moral and cultural development of pupils is **good**. Attendance is **very good** and pupils' sense of responsibility within the community is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is very good in assemblies and throughout the school.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons; this has a positive response to their learning.
- Pupils work and play alongside each other in harmony.
- Relationships are very good.
- Attendance is very good and pupils are happy to come to school.

Commentary

8. Pupils' enthusiasm towards their work and school is very good. Discussions with children of all ages show they are very happy in school. Attendance is very good and is well promoted by the staff. Behaviour is very good throughout the school.

Attendance in 2002/2003, being the latest complete reporting year [%]

Authorised absence	
School data	3.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

9. Pupils make maximum use of their time in school and work very hard throughout the day. They listen attentively to their teachers and are very prompt to settle to their work, either independently or in groups. This was particularly noticeable in an art and design lesson on sculpture when very young children voted on how to tackle the task in their group; because of the very good team work, the resulting sculpture was very good. Pupils' interest in their work is very good and they enjoy opportunities to take responsibility. They have very good opportunities to take the lead in the whole school community, for example, through the very active school council. Good progress is made in pupils' personal, social and emotional development through the very good care, support and guidance they receive.
10. The behaviour of pupils is very good; this creates a calm and friendly atmosphere. Pupils' very good attitudes have a very positive effect upon their learning. They have an excellent understanding of what is acceptable. They understand what is expected of them and appreciate the fairness of the school's approach. Celebration assemblies give pupils an opportunity to acknowledge each other's achievements. Their self-discipline and moral judgement is excellent. Relationships throughout the school are very good. These establish a harmonious environment that enhances pupils' learning.
11. The good social development of pupils is well supported in lessons and by their excellent community involvement. Pupils benefit from and enjoy the many opportunities offered. In lessons, social development is promoted well through group and paired work and discussions. Pupils learn about the world around them and have a good understanding of their responsibility within society. A very good example of this was a geography lesson where pupils considered changes to their local environment; this gave them the opportunity to make mature decisions, and at the same time, to thoroughly enjoy their lesson. Children are able to develop an awareness of the needs of others through the charities they support.
12. The school actively promotes the personal development of those pupils with special educational needs. They are taught the differences between right and wrong in a very caring manner. The behaviour of the pupils with special educational needs, including those with behaviour problems, is at least good, with the majority behaving very well. The pupils' attitude towards their work is generally very good. The teachers and support staff manage these pupils very effectively.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education for all pupils across the school is **very good**. The teaching is very effective. A good curriculum is provided and the pupils are very well cared for and supported. The school has very good relationships with parents and enjoys productive links with the wider community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **very good** and, as a consequence, pupils learn **very well** in lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning is particularly strong in the junior years
- Many teachers have very good subject knowledge, enthusiasm for the subject and high expectations of their pupils in a number of subjects.

- The pupils' very good speaking and listening skills contribute very strongly to their learning in all curriculum areas, as do their positive attitudes.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and very good relationships with their pupils.
- Joint planning by teachers of parallel classes in each year group strengthens the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants, and always fully included, helping them to make very good gains in their learning.
- ICT is not used sufficiently to support teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

13. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. All the teaching and learning in lessons is at least satisfactory; more than two-thirds is either good or better. The school has maintained the very good and excellent teaching with nearly a half of lessons judged very good or excellent. The good teaching is consistent across the school. There are examples of very good teaching across the school and in all subjects.

Summary of teaching observed in 46 lessons during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	20 (43%)	15 (33%)	10 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

14. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and in many instances, very good subject knowledge; consequently, they prepare stimulating, challenging and exciting lessons that enthuse their pupils and enable good learning to take place. Lessons are well planned with stimulating activities which motivate and engage pupils. Pupils respond well to this enthusiasm and work hard, concentrate well and apply themselves to the tasks in hand and, as a result, good learning takes place. Teachers in parallel classes in each year group plan very effectively in pairs and this joint planning strengthens the quality of teaching and effectively enhances the continuity of pupils' learning.
15. There are examples throughout the school of imaginative and creative planning that extends pupils' learning, for example, in the Foundation Stage, when mathematical development was extended through the imaginative use of ribbons in the sand table. Questioning techniques are also used very skilfully and effectively by teachers across the school. Pupils are encouraged to use extended and interesting answers to respond to the open and searching questions that teachers pose.
16. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and their classroom management is very good so that little time is wasted in lessons and learning proceeds at a good pace. Teachers draw on the very good attitudes of pupils to establish very good relationships throughout the school. These positive relationships give the pupils confidence and security - as a result, they work hard and are prepared to try out new ideas and make suggestions in lessons. They are polite, articulate pupils, who respond very well to the good opportunities the teachers provide for learning.
17. The teachers make effective use of assessment. In particular, there are good examples of assessment procedures in mathematics, where some pupils have individual achievement targets set, but this practice is not consistent across the school.
18. The teachers and teaching assistants make every effort to support pupils with special

educational needs and they do this very well. Differentiated teaching and resources are used effectively. The teachers have full responsibility for the implementation of the the pupils' individual education plans. The teaching assistants are very knowledgeable and provide valuable support, either working with pupils on an individual basis or working with groups on interim support. In geography, for example, a Year 6 lesson was observed where good support by the unobtrusive and knowledgeable teaching assistant ensured that all pupils were included in the topic. Across the school, teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully integrated into activities, helping them to make good progress in their learning.

19. Teachers use display particularly effectively across the school. The displays are often interactive and are well used as aids and reinforcement to learning. There were particularly good examples of the effective use of display in history and art and design.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is fully inclusive, ensuring all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full equality of access and opportunity.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Planning is good and effective links are made between different subjects.
- The provision of information and communication technology (ICT) and personal, social and health education has some weaknesses.
- The curriculum is enriched by the provision of a range of activities during and outside the school day.
- Good provision of teaching assistants is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Accommodation is now very good.

Commentary

20. The school provides a good, well-planned curriculum for all its pupils. It fully meets the statutory requirements. The recent introduction of new planning strategies to ensure continuity and progression is having a positive impact on raising both standards and pupil achievement. The curriculum is exciting and interesting, presenting pupils with an imaginative variety of experiences through which they can apply their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively to a range of subjects. The teachers plan the work for the parallel classes very well to ensure all pupils have equality of opportunity. Their planning includes taking into account the different ability and age groups within the school and placing good emphasis on promoting literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is enriched by the school's well-planned and creative cross-curricular activities that have strong focus on working within the community. For example, as an ECO school, the pupils have taken part in a range of successful environmental projects. Pupils clearly enjoy these experiences.
21. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. There are stimulating areas set out in the classroom for the areas of learning, and planning takes full account of the early learning goals. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been sensibly adapted to the school's circumstances and the high standards demonstrate the school's success in these subjects. The use of literacy and numeracy in other subjects is developing very well. Pupils have many opportunities to use their reading and communication skills in a wide variety of situations.
22. This is a fully inclusive school. There is a strong commitment to equal opportunities. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All pupils have equal access to

learning activities; they are fully included in all aspects of school life and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. An up-to-date list of pupils with special educational needs is kept and there is a strong emphasis on catering for their needs within the planning and the grouping. All the pupils are valued and the individual needs are well catered for.

23. The range of additional activities available to the pupils is good, with some very good elements. The pupils from Years 3 to 6 can take part in a wide range of sporting activities, including netball, gymnastics and soccer. Other opportunities include learning to play the guitar, chess and spoken French. The school successfully takes part in local competitions, for example, the chess team won the local chess congress. The younger pupils also have an opportunity to attend a music club. Participation in the arts is developed very well during the school day, the pupils taking part in a range of projects with local artists. The pupils' work has been on display in local art galleries and exhibitions. All the pupils have an opportunity to take part in dramatic and musical productions. For example, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 presented 'Babushka' to the parents last Christmas. The good range of visits and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum and extends pupils' learning in a variety of ways. For example, pupils took part in a Victorian Day at Croxteth Hall. The annual Year 6 residential visit provides the pupils with opportunities to experience outdoor adventure activities.
24. The provision for PSHE is satisfactory and there are some good elements. The school has introduced opportunities within the school day to develop these areas. Pupils are developing an increasing awareness of their personal development and responsibilities as they progress through the school. Year 6 are encouraged to take on responsibility, for example, helping the teachers during assembly and the school council provides the pupils with an opportunity to accept responsibility for changes in the school. The pupils are encouraged to discuss social and personal issues in circle time. Health education does not provide sufficient opportunity to enable pupils to learn about drugs education. It is an area that needs developing. Citizenship is good with the pupils, for example, involved in environmental projects, including recycling a wide range of waste products.
25. Best use is made of teachers' and support staff expertise. The teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Their expertise is particularly effective in supporting those pupils with special educational needs. Their support is having a very positive impact on developing pupils' self-confidence and social skills.
26. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in accommodation with a new extension and refurbishment of offices, including a new library and small group teaching room. The accommodation is now very good. The school makes very good use of all its available space, including the extensive grounds that are used imaginatively to promote learning. The quality of displays throughout the school is very good. Learning resources, other than for ICT, are satisfactory. In ICT, there is insufficient hardware and the pupils do not have sufficient access to support learning across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for pupils' health, safety, care and welfare are **very good**. The personal and academic guidance is **good**, as are the arrangements for seeking and acting upon pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive views about the school.
- Pupils build very good relationships with adults and each other.
- Pupils are very well cared for, and health and safety are given a high priority.
- Induction arrangements are good at each stage of pupils' education.

Commentary

27. The school provides pupils with a caring and attractive environment where they feel valued and supported. The health and safety arrangements, including risk assessments and child protection procedures, are very good. The very good relationships that exist in this school community and the good provision for pupils' moral and social development create a very caring, safe and supportive environment. This has a very positive effect on their learning.
28. The school offers very good academic support and guidance to the pupils. Consequently, pupils are well motivated and success is recognised and rewarded. However, there is no system for assessing and recording pupils' PSHE. Pupils learn to evaluate their work and understand the purpose for their lessons. Staff know and understand the needs of each pupil well. These needs are well and sensitively cared for and consequently pupils feel happy and enthusiastic. They enjoy being singled out, for example, in the Celebration assembly, and there is keen and friendly rivalry for their House to win the Cup which is presented each week.
29. The school has very good arrangements for seeking pupils' views through the democratically elected school council. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and improvements and to use their initiative. Following the new building improvements, the school is able to work very much as one community and all within the school environment are equally valued.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with other schools and the community is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Partnership with other schools is very good.
- The school has very good links with the community.
- The school provide good information for parents.
- The majority of parents have very positive views about the school.

Commentary

30. Relationships with parents are good. Although a minority of parents expressed views which were unsupportive of the school, this was not substantiated during the inspection. The views of many parents were sought during the inspection and they were unstinting in their praise of the school. Parents are kept well informed about the life of the school and have good opportunities to be involved in all that it does. They are very welcome in school, and the school has promoted initiatives such as the Parents as Educators. However, there is a need to more actively seek and act upon parents' views. The quality of information that parents receive about the life of the school is good; newsletters are friendly and informative and give parents a clear indication of life within the school community. Written reports on pupils' progress do not give parents a sufficiently clear and accurate picture in order for parents to have a greater awareness of their children's learning.
31. The school has very good systems in place to support parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs. They make every effort to make sure parents are fully informed of their child's developmental needs. For example, the teachers and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) review pupils' individual plans on a termly basis. This information is then discussed with parents at the parents meetings' or annual reviews.
32. The school's links with the community are very good. Pupils make visits to places of interest and visiting specialists broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils make very good use of the local environment, especially in their art and geography lessons. The partnership with other schools is very good and has a very positive effect upon the quality of experiences and opportunities

offered to pupils and their teachers. The very good link established through Range Secondary School and St Luke's Primary School directly benefits pupils' literacy and mathematics skills.

33. Parents spoken to appreciate how well the school cares for their children and several parents emphasised how very happy their children are in school. The school has a very active parents association, Friends of Woodlands School Association. The organisers give unstintingly of their time, and with the support of parents and the community, are able to raise valuable funds to help the school. The group is able to enhance the children's social and educational facilities within the school through their well-organised activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school, including the leadership by the headteacher, is **very good**, as is the governance. The school is **very well** managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and high expectations of both pupils and staff.
- The deputy head and special educational needs co-ordinator fulfil their roles very well and provide very good support to the headteacher.
- The Foundation Stage is well led and very successfully managed.
- The governing body fulfils its responsibilities most effectively and contributes very well to the overall development of the school.
- There is a marked commitment to inclusion by all members of staff, which is most successfully achieved.
- There are very good procedures for tracking and monitoring pupil performance.
- Some job descriptions are in need of updating to reflect changing roles and responsibilities.
- Most subjects are well led; however, the growing proportion of part-time teachers is creating some difficulties in the deployment of key responsibilities across the school.

Commentary

34. The leadership, management and governance of the school have each improved since the last inspection. The headteacher leads and manages this large primary school very well. Since his appointment two years ago, he has worked very effectively to strengthen practice and raise attainment of what was already a good school. His success in this is attributed to many factors, including his own vision, which he has been able to share with increasing clarity and confidence with all colleagues. He has high expectations for the pupils' performance and for the professionalism of all staff colleagues. Soon after his appointment, he rightly set about establishing long-term aims and goals for the school, and these are largely being achieved in a relatively short time. He has a clear grasp of curriculum development and what constitutes effective teaching and learning. In this, he is ably supported by the senior management team, in particular, by the recently appointed deputy head and by the SENCO.
35. Most subjects and aspects of the school are well led, and roles and responsibilities are generally clearly established. The Foundation Stage team is very well managed and subjects such as English, art and design, history and physical education are very well led. The increasing number of part-time teachers, whilst having no negative impact on teaching and learning in specific classrooms, is creating some restrictions in the options and models for deploying leaders with key responsibilities across the school, and for sharing information throughout the week.
36. Special needs provision is a high priority in the school. The SENCO leads and manages this area very well, demonstrating both expertise and enthusiasm. Working with the teachers and external agencies she is very effective in identifying the needs of those pupils with special

educational needs. She provides valuable support for the teachers and teaching assistants. Very good recording systems are in place to monitor pupil progress.

37. Governance of the school is very good. The governing body is well led by a chair, who has a good grasp of the range of responsibilities in her role, and acts effectively as critical friend to the headteacher and senior staff. Governors' meetings are well led, managed and documented. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Collectively, and individually, governors contribute well to strategic decision making, for example, the recent substantial building works and refurbishment; they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, are involved in developing and monitoring the school development plan and are well briefed by the headteacher and others on how well the school is performing. A number have been able to visit school from time to time but no formal log is kept of this, or of any schedule of training attended and feedback to fellow governors. The governors report in full to parents; minutes from their annual parents' meetings indicate very few parents attend and no contentious issues have been raised in recent years. The governing body, together with the headteacher, are determined to obtain good value for money from the services received and rigorously scrutinise options before making key decisions.
38. The school is very well managed. There are very good procedures for monitoring the performance of all pupils; these are largely led by the head and deputy head, but class teachers and subject leaders are also involved at an appropriate level. In particular, the school has carefully monitored the progress made by specific groups as a result of additional support in English and mathematics in the junior years, and as a result, has been able to deploy staff and develop support strategies most effectively. There are good procedures for setting and monitoring pupils' individual performance targets and the headteacher's high expectations help ensure these targets are realistically challenging. The overall current evaluation procedures are good; however, with the help of the deputy head, and the Local Education Authority (LEA), a very comprehensive structure has been prepared for implementation from September 2004 once further staff training has been completed. Staff development across the school is well structured and planned coherently to reflect school development plan priorities, issues from performance management and national issues. Some job descriptions are out-of-date and need revising to reflect evolving roles and responsibilities. The professional status of the teaching assistants has been successfully enhanced, partially by their involvement in performance management. This large school runs smoothly and efficiently from day to day. There are efficient administrative procedures.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,052,932
Total expenditure	946,343
Expenditure per pupil	2,308

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	90,664
Balance carried forward to the next year	88,298

39. The budget is well managed and there are effective procedures for monitoring it. An audit by the LEA reported good overall procedures; the minor recommendations are reported to have been fully addressed.
40. There are a number of aids and few barriers to raising standards achieved even further in this successful school. The aids relate principally to the very good teaching, the pupils' very positive attitudes to the school and their work, the parents' commitment to their children's education and the headteacher's vision and high expectations of all concerned with the school. The only significant barrier relates to the current achievement in ICT, with some pupils having insufficient access to ICT, some teachers continuing to lack confidence in teaching the subject and opportunities not being fully developed to use ICT to help study skills across the curriculum.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

41. Since the last inspection, there have been marked improvements, notably in the quality of teaching and in the accommodation. Teaching is now either good or better and the outdoor provision has been developed to a high specification, including an area immediately outside the classrooms.
42. There are two classes, one has a full-time teacher and the other is a job share. These teachers are well supported by two nursery nurses and one teaching assistant. They make a good team and are well led and managed by the Foundation Stage leader.
43. The current admissions policy enables all reception children to start school in September of the year in which they are five. This can be on a full-time or part-time basis. Most parents take advantage of the full-time option. Nearly all children have pre-school experience and come from 17 different settings.
44. Good relationships are established with the parents and they are kept informed of their children's progress through parents' evenings.
45. The attainment of the children on entry is just above national expectations. This is based on teachers' assessments at the beginning of the year. By the end of the year, most pupils will, according to their Foundation Stage Profile, meet the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning: in several areas, some children will exceed these goals. Detailed records and observation information are kept of children's achievement and these reflect the good progress the children make.
46. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and have developed clear plans to meet these needs. The curriculum provides a good balance across the six areas of learning. Children in both classes share the same experiences. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to pursue their own interests in an imaginative way.
47. Resources inside and outside are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve well because the quality of teaching is very good.
- There are clear routines and children know what is expected of them.
- Children concentrate well when their interest is engaged.
- Teachers offer good role models and every opportunity is taken to affirm positive behaviours and relationships.
- Children are happy at school; their successes are celebrated, so helping to raise self-esteem.

Commentary

48. The personal, social and emotional development is higher than expected for children of their age. The children know the routines and expectations of the classes and this helps to develop

a harmonious, inclusive community. This is clearly evident when children and practitioners gather together for 'fruit time'. The children sit in a circle, each with their own serviette, and enjoy their fruit and drink. Very Important People (VIPs) take it in turns to be responsible for the distribution and everyone is expected to clear away. They wait their turns patiently, even when 'circle type' activities are a little tedious, which were experienced in a Physical development lesson and a music lesson.

49. When teaching is interesting and they see a purpose in the activity, the children concentrate well and are eager to learn. This was noticeable in a session in the computer suite when children knew that if they made a concerted effort to listen hard and follow instructions they would quickly be able to draw a shape and fill the centre with a different colour. The activities on offer allow pupils to be independent, especially in the outdoor area.
50. Children are well supported by all the adults, who show they value the children's contributions and hard work. Children show pride in their work and they are rewarded in their efforts by praise, stickers and the weekly celebratory assembly. Displays show pupils' achievements but are not always at a height where the children can see for themselves.
51. Children's behaviour is very good, even when activities and routines seem tedious.
52. The teachers' very good care of the children was especially noticeable when the children went outside during the hot weather. Children had to wear their hats and put on sun cream for protection.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

- Children are articulate and confident speakers.
- Children listen well when they are stimulated.
- Children enjoy books.
- The good questioning skills of practitioners encourage children to give extended answers.

Commentary

53. The children's communication skills are higher than would be expected of children of this age. This is because children enter school with a rich language base. Teachers use every opportunity to extend children's skills by offering activities which stimulate language development. They make good progress and speak audibly and with confidence. This good teaching means that learning is good. Currently, the role-play area promotes effectively the language of the 'Baby Clinic'. The children use appropriate language to act out the relevant roles of the situation. There have been opportunities during the year for this area to be a castle, bakery and 'The Nativity'. This enables the children to have a good variety of experiences in which to develop their language. Teachers' questioning skills are good and encourage pupils to use extended, interesting answers. One group were able to explain their jumping and measuring activity so the rest of the class understood.
54. Children enjoy reading and looking at books and are encouraged to share books with the adults at home. The more able children are reading simple texts. Children are shown the 'mechanics' of a book and have made their own non-fiction book about castles, which gives information, pictures and has a contents and index. The quality and quantity of the books are satisfactory.
55. Progress in writing is good. At the beginning of the year, children copy and make marks and by the end, the more able are writing independently.

56. Children will meet the early learning goals in this area by the end of reception and some will exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

- Teaching is good or very good.
- Mathematical thinking is encouraged in all parts of the curriculum.
- Most children are working at the expected levels in this area and some will exceed the early learning goals particularly in number.
- The more able children are starting to record their answers as jottings.

Commentary

57. The quality of teaching is good and in some cases very good. In one very good mathematics lesson, the teacher wanted the children to compare lengths of ribbon and develop the precise language of length. Ribbons were hidden in sand and the children had first to predict which one might be the longest. There was then an opportunity for the children to pull the ribbons from the sand and see if their ideas were right. At this point, the children became totally absorbed and there was a moment of awe and wonder as the ribbons were carefully taken out of the sand and their lengths examined. Further discussion showed that most of the class understood long, longer and longest. In another activity, children had a chance to practise their recognition of written numbers. They had to choose an item from a catalogue to give to a friend. This item had then to be ordered by using a mobile phone to ring the catalogue helpline.
58. Children's achievement in number is stronger than in other areas of the mathematics curriculum. More able children record their mathematics as number sentences or as jottings. Teachers use registration and singing sessions well to reinforce mathematical ideas.
59. Resources are good and include a Smartboard and programmable toys.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children develop a good knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children use a variety of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Further resources could be included to represent cultural diversity.

Commentary

60. From displays, photographs, children's work and discussions, there is evidence to show that a wide range of experiences are planned, which develop a good knowledge and understanding of their world. When one boy was asked to talk about a friend, his response was "My friend lives in France. I go on a plane to see him." Another boy's comment during 'fruit time' showed his understanding, "Oranges give us vitamins so we grow big and strong".
61. Teachers take every opportunity to pass on their knowledge to the children in relevant and interesting ways. Their probing questions enable them to assess children's understanding and knowledge. Most children will meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception.
62. The children have regular access to ICT. They can control the mouse and are able to 'drag and click'. They use various forms of ICT to support other subjects; tape recorders in their

literacy work, programmable toys and mobile phones in their mathematics. Access to a digital camera would give further opportunities for teachers and children to evaluate their learning.

63. There is a lack of multicultural resources and their need has already been identified on the school development plan.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have positive attitudes to their physical development.
- Children develop large and small physical skills well.
- The outdoor area is an asset.

Commentary

64. Children enjoy physical activities and almost all are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals and some will exceed them. In a well taught physical development lesson, the children not only showed they could throw and catch but work together in groups. Successful children were asked to demonstrate their skills in an effort to help other children improve their performance.
65. During the inspection, the children showed little interest in the tricycles or the climbing frame or the large construction materials they have in their immediate outdoor area. Photographs show children playing hopscotch and building with the large bricks. Children are offered small world activities, such as the castle, painting with fine brushes and jigsaws to develop their dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for role-play.
- Children are offered some interesting activities and materials to develop their creative work.
- Children need more opportunities to develop their own creative ideas and thinking.

Commentary

66. All adults clearly explain and show children new skills, which the children are then able to go and practice. A group of children were asked to paint their pebbles with the nursery nurse. She encouraged them to hold the paintbrush correctly, mix an interesting colour, and then carefully paint their pebble. The final result is good and the children are proud of their achievements. The Early Learning Goals will be met by most children by the end of the reception year.
67. The role-play areas are a strong feature of the Foundation Stage. They are well resourced and the children are able to develop their abilities, not only in language and social skills, but also in their creative thinking.
68. In music, the children sing tunefully and play untuned percussion instruments. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. One lesson was enjoyed outside but the lack of instruments slowed the pace of the lesson as everyone waited their turn.

69. No dance was seen during the inspection but annotated photos show pupils dancing with ribbons to accentuate their movements.
70. Resources for artwork are satisfactory but there is little to inspire and develop creativity. There has been an improvement in the range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments since the last inspection but more untuned are needed to maintain pupils' interests.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

English

Provision in English is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of English is very good.
- Effective challenge is provided for the more able pupils and very good support for those requiring extra help.
- Achievement is very good overall and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The boys achieve very well, demonstrating a love for literature in their wide range of different language activities.
- Pupils with special educational needs are making very good progress.
- The subject is very well led and managed with pupil progress being carefully monitored.
- The use of ICT is insufficiently developed to support learning.

Commentary

71. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and writing. They have held up well since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. In Year 6, standards are well above average overall. The National Curriculum test results over the last four years demonstrate the school has maintained the very high standards seen in the previous inspection. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is very good. The achievement of the boys, especially in writing, is very good; although it is in line with the girls, it is well above the national average. This is because good teaching consistently engages them in varied, richly resourced learning opportunities.
72. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well overall, making very good progress towards the specific targets in their well written individual education plans. This is mainly due to the very good arrangements for interim support and differentiated work in lessons. For example, the Living Language programme is having a very positive impact on pupils' language development in Years 1 and 3.
73. The more able, gifted and talented pupils achieve very well, mainly due to the high expectations and challenges provided. A range of extra activities are organised to meet the needs of these pupils. For example, pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 have recently taken part in a project with other schools. The pupils demonstrated an ability to write articles, stories and games of a very high standard in the magazines they produced.
74. One of the main reasons for the very good standards being attained throughout the school is the pupils' confidence in using a full range of vocabulary when expressing themselves. Standards in spoken English are very good. This is evident in all classes. Throughout the school, teachers maximise the opportunities for pupils to use good vocabulary because they are often involved in lively discussions, debates and role-play. For example, when reading *Carrie's War*, the Year 6 pupils were able to take on the character of Mr Evans very successfully. All the pupils demonstrate good listening skills when adults and other children are talking. They follow instructions very well. The quality of their listening adds much to the pupils' ability to learn and to achieve their full potential.

75. Standards in reading are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. When children start in the reception many have already experienced being read to at home and have a good knowledge of how books work. The school successfully builds on this experience and helps pupils to become very interested in books. As a result of this good work, many of the pupils are attaining levels beyond those expected for their age in reading by the time they finish Year 2. Pupils' enthusiasm for reading is seen at its best when one Year 2 girl was able to describe at length her favourite non-fiction travel books. The staff provide interesting activities to help pupils with their reading, including the successful introduction of reading journals. The school has developed a home reading scheme. This is well resourced with a wide range of books to stimulate interest. However, strategies for teachers to monitor the pupils' ability to read the books are inconsistent. The reading diaries also provide limited opportunities for a dialogue between home and school on reading progress. Further development of the home reading scheme is acknowledged by the school as an area for development.
76. Staff are working very hard to improve standards in writing. There has been an improvement in achievement for all the pupils, including the boys, who are responding to the stimulating, interesting and exciting activities provided to develop their skills. Pupils' wide vocabulary and good use of descriptive terms are exploited to very good effect in their writing. The pupils in years 1 and 2 are making good progress. For example, in story writing, the pupils in Year 2 are able to develop their ideas using good descriptive vocabulary and the correct punctuation.
77. From year 3 onwards, pupils feel confident about intermixing description, dialogue and action in their stories. They show maturity when handling punctuation and accurately punctuate direct speech in their work. By year 6, the pupils bring in elements of creativity to their writing with good effect. They know how to hold a reader's interest, using humour and asides very effectively. They use complex sentences to gain maximum effect and can inter-mingle short sentences that are punchy and make telling points. Punctuation is good, spelling is accurate and their handwriting is neat and legible. Opportunities for the pupils to use ICT to support the development of writing skills are limited.
78. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge, skills and understanding. They manage the teaching of pupils of different abilities very well with all elements of the literacy strategy covered. When the teaching is very good, the teachers provide a range of rich, exciting and interesting activities to stimulate learning. Humour is used to very good effect, to which the pupils respond very well. The depth and range of provision would not be possible without the valuable support from the teaching assistants.
79. Subject leadership is very good. The new subject leader and headteacher have made a very good start. They have a clear grasp of what needs to be done to improve provision and standards and they have already achieved much in a short time. For example, a new library and learning centre is opening shortly and extra funding has been spent on library and home reading books. There is very good planning, assessment and tracking of pupil progress with consistency throughout the school. Planning for the parallel classes is very good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Relationships are very good and all the staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

80. Pupils use their language and literacy skills very well in other subjects. Some of the best work was seen in an art lesson when the pupils had to describe their patterns to the whole class. Pupils make good use of their speaking skills across the curriculum because they are frequently engaged in discussion and debates about a range of tasks and topics. Reading and writing skills are also used in many areas of the curriculum, including science, RE, history and geography. Opportunities for pupils to develop their reference skills in other subjects are limited: this is an area for development when the new library is open.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above the national average in both key stages.
- Teaching is consistently good or very good.
- Special needs pupils make good progress and their achievement is very good.
- The subject is well led and managed the setting of mathematical targets for individual pupils is not consistent across the school.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in mathematics to support learning and teaching.

Commentary

81. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in mathematics are well above the national average. The national test results reflect this and show that standards are also well above those of similar schools. These high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils enjoy the subject. Able pupils are challenged and consequently achieve well. Boys out-perform girls at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 but this is less marked at the younger age. Special needs pupils make good progress and their achievement is good. They are well supported by teaching assistants, who are well briefed and confident.
82. By the age of seven, pupils can use a variety of mental strategies, know appropriate number facts such as number bonds to 10 and for the more able know and understand number bonds to 100. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of place value and have worked in practical ways with measures and money. Pupils show their skills in calculations by adding simple amounts together successfully. A good number of pupils can correctly add 23p to £8.91 using different methods. Real life problems are set appropriately to enable pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge.
83. By the age of 11 pupils have a good understanding of the number system. They can read, write and order numbers to at least one million. Pupils know about lines of symmetry and Venn diagrams. Computational skills, both orally and written, are good. Most pupils have mastered long division calculations using an informal method. Pupils use calculators to support their mathematical thinking. They use mathematical language, such as factors and inverse, correctly. They apply their knowledge to solve problems.
84. In the lessons observed, all teachers effectively used the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy to deliver their lessons. Where teaching is good or very good, the lesson is well planned and builds on previous learning. The aim of the lesson is shared with pupils. Teachers use the correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology. Teachers ask questions which probe pupils' thinking and take their learning forward. The work is practical and relevant. In a Year 1 class, pupils' skills of estimating were put to the test when they had to guess how many smaller containers of sand would fill a larger one. In the younger classes, the emphasis is on oral and mental work. Pupils enjoy this part of the lesson and respond quickly with correct answers. The pupils are beginning to discuss their mathematical ideas.
85. Pupils' work is always marked and comments are generally positive. In some classes, teachers' comments are constructive and say what the pupils have achieved, for example, written in one Year 2 book is "Well done you are using mental strategies to solve subtraction problems". Some pupils have one or two individual or group targets written in the front of their books which they are aiming to achieve. This practice is not consistent across the school and pupils are not given the next steps for their learning or a chance to evaluate their own work.

86. In the lessons observed the learning intentions were taken word for word from the Framework for the teaching of Mathematics. These are not phrased in a way that is easily understood by pupils and often encompasses a wide area of mathematics and consequently pupils are sometimes insufficiently clear about what they are learning. Smaller steps need to be shared with the pupils which enable them to be clearer about their successes and would more easily encourage the skills of self-evaluation.
87. Pupils apply their mathematical skills to other areas of the curriculum. This is particularly noticeable in science and geography.
88. The subject is well led and managed by two teachers. They have attended courses and provided in-service training for their colleagues. The work which they have shared on the 'plenary' session has made a positive impact on this part of the lesson. Monitoring by one of the subject leaders indicates that this has improved practice. Visits have been arranged to other schools to see good mathematics practice. They analyse relevant data and use the findings to support their action plan. The current plan identifies the development of mathematics for the more able pupil and further work on developing ICT, which are priorities. A mathematics policy has been written but is still in draft.
89. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The role of the subject leader has been strengthened and this is making a good impact on the mathematics curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of learning experiences is provided with good emphasis on experimental and investigative work.
- Teaching is good, with good shared planning so that all pupils in each year group benefit equally.
- Very good use is made of the local environment.
- There is insufficient progression in pupils' recording of investigations for them to work more independently.

Commentary

90. Pupils in all year groups achieve well and standards are above average throughout the school. Able pupils are achieving well throughout the school. A high proportion of Year 6 pupils reach the higher Level 5 in national tests. Whilst the trend over the last four years has fluctuated, standards have always been at least above average and often higher. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has been in post for too short a time to have made any positive impact. She has, however, already identified the need for the recording of investigations to be more varied and progressive in order that pupils are able to select and devise the most suitable planning and recording methods.
91. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their senses to observe and listen. They record carefully what they hear and use vocabulary such as 'nocturnal' with understanding. Good use is made of literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils write clear explanations of why certain electrical circuits will not work and they keep diaries recording the growth of bean plants. Pictograms are drawn to compare eye colours and the distances toy cars travel are measured and recorded on bar graphs. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils' books show a wealth of investigations. Year 3 find out why birds have different feet and Year 6 plan and construct a filter for cleaning dirty water. This links well with geography and stimulates interest in the plight of some people in parts of Africa, resulting in raising money for Water Aid.

92. Teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan together effectively so that all pupils in each year group benefit equally. They make the subject interesting with pupils constantly being involved in practical activities. A very good Year 3 lesson saw pupils busily engaged in testing elasticity. They worked very well together in small groups and selected their own methods of measuring. Year 6 also benefited from very good teaching. They discussed and predicted independently, working with enthusiasm. Most needed, and were given, guidance in planning the task but their efforts resulted in greater knowledge about the relationship between height and long jumping.
93. The school grounds provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils to study nature at first hand and best use is made of the local environment. Year 2 pupils were seen identifying the different habitats of plants and tiny creatures, marking their findings on maps. Enquiries into habitats were furthered in Year 5, who constructed some homes for woodlice in order to monitor their preferences. Good use was being made of computers, with sensors monitoring light and temperature. Pupils' work is well presented and suitably marked in almost all classes. Occasionally, misspelling of specific scientific vocabulary is ignored. By the time they are in Year 6, the pupils' work is very well written with tables and diagrams included and drawn carefully. These pupils have targets in their books and know the level at which they are aiming.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved from those reported in the last inspection but are not yet high enough, with many pupils not achieving as well as they should by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' access to computers has improved but remains relatively limited with some classes having only 30 minutes in the ICT suite in a given week.
- The size and shape of the ICT suite makes whole class teaching and learning very difficult.
- The acting subject leader is providing good leadership during her short time in school.
- There is some good and very good teaching in the subject, but not all teachers are confident in teaching ICT or in ensuring its best application in other areas of the curriculum.
- There are good examples of using ICT to support other subjects but no systematic way of promoting this to best advantage.

Commentary

94. Standards by the end of Year 2 are at least in line with national expectations, with some pupils exceeding those expectations. By the end of Year 6, whilst some pupils exceed national expectations, standards achieved are not high enough, with too few achieving to their potential. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in the ICT suite and in the classroom and are enabled to achieve well.
95. Almost all pupils use a computer keyboard confidently and the large majority of older pupils report regularly using a computer at home, which contributes to their overall skill level. Pupils of all ages respond very positively to the opportunity to use computers in school and learn rapidly when working in the ICT suite; for example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils became confident in using instructions to control movement around the screen. The pupils made very good gains in their understanding within one Year 5 lesson, where they were working in pairs to prepare questions and enter information in a database on mini-beasts to be interrogated by younger pupils. However, their access to the full range of the ICT curriculum is relatively limited, with few opportunities for developing such aspects as control, simulations, and multi-media presentations, web-site design and music making. They are confident in the use of the Internet to find information and can import this information into their work. They are aware of the

security issues in using the Internet, most have sound skills in text management and the use of art packages.

96. In the course of a week, many pupils have insufficient first hand experience of using computers; some classes have no more than half an hour a week in the ICT suite, and for one Year 6 class, this is the final half hour of the day on a Friday afternoon, and yet the suite is empty for large portions of time some mornings. Most class weekly timetables do not include additional ICT activities based in the classroom. The suite is well presented with reasonably up-to-date and reliable equipment and effective displays of pupils' work; however, its size and shape make it difficult for whole class lessons, especially for classes of older pupils. These constraints are limiting the overall achievement of the pupils. The provision of hardware and software in ICT was identified as a key issue at the time of the last inspection. Progress has been made by the creation of a suite and increasing the number of machines, but there are insufficient computers for a school of this size and this remains a weakness.
97. In the two lessons observed in the ICT suite, the quality of teaching was either good or very good, with well-planned activities clearly explained and a good pace maintained through the lessons. Pupils with special educational needs were supported very well in these lessons, carefully partnered with other pupils and helped by skilled teaching assistants. However, other inspection evidence indicates the overall quality of teaching and learning is no better than satisfactory. The range of pupils' work made available was very small, pupils in Year 6 lacked confidence in explaining their learning in ICT over their last year in school, and little structured systematic access is planned for pupils to use a computer in the classroom in other lessons. In two classrooms, teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to support their teaching across the curriculum and pupils respond very positively. There has been an extensive training programme for teachers and teaching assistants, which continues. The school is aware, however, that not all teachers are yet confident in teaching the subject and need further help. There is a well-established whole school system for assessing pupils' progress in ICT, identifying those pupils in line, below or above expectations in each aspect of their ICT work. There is no school portfolio of annotated work or other procedures for strengthening and moderating teachers' assessment skills.
98. Leadership of the subject over time has been sound. At the time of the inspection, the temporary acting subject leader was providing good leadership with drive, energy and clarity of purpose. She has produced a very helpful draft action plan which addresses most of the weaknesses.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

99. There are individual good, and sometimes very good, examples of ICT being used across the curriculum to support learning in other subjects. Examples of these include geography work in Year 2 where pupils have studied Poole harbour, in history in Year 4, using the Internet, and in Year 5, developing branching databases in science, describing the features of mini-beasts. However, overall, there is a lack of planned and progressive use of ICT through the school to strengthen learning in other subjects. At present, only two classrooms have the use of an interactive whiteboard as a teaching and learning resource and there is little evidence of pupils using digital cameras to record, display or evaluate their work.

HUMANITIES

Geography

The provision for geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- Good planning of work, including local environmental issues.
- There is insufficient recorded work in Year 2.
- Very good classroom displays provide support for learning.

Commentary

100. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 and there was insufficient work recorded to make a judgement on standards by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those usually seen at this age and pupils are achieving well. Pupils are well aware of the impact of humans on the environment and their reactions to natural disasters. They know that climate affects how people live and use geographical vocabulary in its correct context.
101. Good and very good teaching was seen. An excellent Year 5 lesson stemmed from the teacher's thorough planning, motivational approach and excellent presentation of the topic for discussion. This resulted in pupils debating a local issue in a mature and rational way. They showed very clear understanding of balancing the benefits of commercial development against the need to protect the environment. Pupils in a Year 3 class also showed maturity when engaged in a similar task. Very good direction and questioning by the teacher encouraged them to give reasons for their views. Teachers' questioning is very good. When Year 6 discussed the causes of the Rhine floods of 1999, the pupils gave a range of reasons for the disaster. They used their literacy skills well to read and interpret adult newspaper articles. The teacher was well supported by her assistant, who worked unobtrusively but knowledgeably. This ensured that all pupils were fully included. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn through more oral experiences. However, the recording tasks set in Year 2 are sometimes insufficiently challenging and some worksheets are used inappropriately.
102. Throughout the school, some very good displays support the subject well. In Year 1, there are examples of plan views and aerial photographs. A number of classrooms display local maps and aerial photographs, sometimes with an available magnifying lens. Pupils' work includes maps of local walks and posters to illustrate the amenities of Formby. Year 5 has photographs of their field trip and the pupils' very good research projects on rivers. The subject has a high profile in the school.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching.
- Very good leadership and management.
- Very good classroom displays and a wide range of visits and special days, which provide very good enhancement to learning.

Commentary

103. Standards in the subject are above average throughout the school. The pupils achieve well and the more able pupils in Year 6 show very high levels of achievement. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 but planning and work samples were studied. Pupils write stories about important events, such as the Gunpowder Plot and the Great Fire of London. They recognise the importance of famous people, such as Samuel Pepys and Louis Braille. Year 6 pupils talk with knowledge about aspects of the Victorian era and understand the value of learning about history.
104. Teaching is very good. Two very good lessons were seen, in Years 3 and 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is shared well through very effective joint planning. Very good use is made of resources and pupils are encouraged to research information. Year 3 pupils used a wide range of reference books to seek information about aspects of Ancient Greece. When they reported their findings to their classmates, pupils spoke confidently. Year 6 pupils studied an extract from the 1851 census of the local area to extract information. The teacher's knowledge and a previous visit by a local resident brought the subject to life, particularly when a connection was made between Victorian businessmen and local football 'heroes'.
105. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, their enthusiasm for the subject was most evident. They spoke excitedly about a visit made to Croxteth Hall when they acted roles in a Victorian situation. Similarly, they recalled a much earlier 'Greek Day' held in school. A variety of similar events provide pupils with first-hand experiences of life in other times. They also handle and use artefacts to gain some understanding, for example, of how their ancestors used wattle and daub. The subject co-ordinator is very aware of providing such experiences and is continually adding to them. The books of Year 6 pupils reveal her high expectations.
106. Displays throughout the school are very good. Teachers give much time and thought to this so that in every classroom there are aids and reinforcement to learning. These include timelines, historical maps, photographs and posters. Explanations are alongside where required, such as the construction of cruck barns and questions are posed to focus pupils' attention.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching throughout the school.
- Good leadership and management.
- The subject supports pupils' moral and social development very well.
- There are insufficient visitors to school and visits made to places of worship other than churches.

Commentary

107. The curriculum is well planned and taught so that standards are above those expected in years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well. Planning is based on the locally-agreed syllabus. Christianity provides the basis for learning but pupils also study the beliefs and values of a range of other faiths.
108. Good teaching is evident from Year 1 when pupils learn about special days, gifts and symbols. This is extended in Year 2 and all infant pupils, for example, also look at aspects of Judaism. The curriculum expands in Years 3 to 6 and pupils extend their knowledge of Christianity and delve more into Judaism, Hinduism and Islam, as well as touching on other faiths. Comparisons are made, such as between the Christian and Islamic views of angels. Good

use is made of artefacts where possible. Year 1 pupils were able to examine a menorah, kippah and seder plate. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils discussed scenarios previously enacted about Papa Panov and the Good Samaritan. This resulted in one pupil being able to relate an incident in class which helped her to take a better attitude.

109. The subject provides very good support for pupils' moral and social development, for example, by linking the behaviour of role models to that of pupils. In Year 5, Mother Teresa provides an example of faith in action. Her example of being a good neighbour is strengthened by quotations from various faiths. In discussion, Year 6 pupils, whilst aware of the different symbols, artefacts and ceremonies, also know that overall beliefs have many similarities.
110. Well-planned assemblies also seek to promote, not only spirituality, but relate also to such topics as friendship and sharing. The efforts and successes of individuals and teams are celebrated together. This strengthens the harmonious ethos of the school. The co-ordinators provide good leadership, working well together. Whilst good use is made of local churches in studying Christianity and in history, no visits are made to other places of worship. A further area for improvement already recognised by the co-ordinators is the need to invite more visitors to share their experiences with the pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

The provision in art and design is **very good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Art and design is a strength of the school with pupils achieving standards well beyond expectations.
- A particular strength is the pupils' ability to appreciate the work of famous artists, recognising the different styles and techniques used to create the individual effects.
- The very good teaching provides inspiration.
- The pupils have a very positive attitude towards art and design.
- Subject leadership is very good.
- Planning and assessment procedures are well developed.
- The school provides a wide range of extra activities to support learning.

Commentary

111. The quality of work in the school is very good throughout the school. Art and design is a high priority in the school and is used very well to complement pupils' learning. Pupils of all ages reach very high standards and achieve very well. From entry into the school, the children make very good progress, with some pupils making exceptional progress to the highest levels of attainment at the end of their school experience. Pupils' critical appreciation of artists is well established in Years 1 and 2. For example, in Year 1, pupils developed clay models, drawings and collages in the style of Andy Galsworthy. This is developed very well in the juniors. A very good example was seen in Year 6 of the pupils' ability to create excellent pastel abstracts in the style of Picasso.
112. The quality of teaching is very good. Teaching is stimulating and challenging but at the same time offers thoroughly enjoyable learning. Pupils are consistently offered the opportunities to work in a range of media but on the same theme. Strong emphasis is placed on using the local environment. For example, Year 1 pupils worked very well collaboratively to create a very good collage of a bird on a nest, using natural materials found in the school grounds.

113. The quality of leadership and management in the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is passionate about her subject and strives to maintain very high standards and opportunities for all pupils. Work is displayed about the school in imaginative and interactive ways. Pupils can be in no doubt that their efforts are valued. The high quality sketchbooks, photograph albums and portfolios of work provide ready material for assessment.
114. The involvement of the local artistic community and visits to art galleries ensure the pupils take part in a wide range of rich and exciting activities to stimulate learning. For example, the pupils in Year 1 worked with the LEA art adviser to create an excellent textile tapestry depicting the copse in the school grounds. This has been on loan to local art galleries and displayed in exhibitions. A local artist has also worked with pupils on creating sculptures. School visits to art galleries and exhibitions often take place, usually with a specific focus to support learning in other subjects, for example, visiting Walker Art Gallery to see an exhibition of Egyptian art.

Design and technology

115. Design and technology was sampled: only one lesson was seen in design and technology. It is not possible, therefore, to make a firm judgement about provision, although limited evidence indicates that it is at least satisfactory. This is a similar position to that found in the last inspection. In addition to observing the one lesson, inspectors spoke to pupils, looked at pupils work and spoke to the subject leader.
116. The one lesson observed and scrutiny of pupils' work indicates satisfactory achievement in design and technology. Teaching provides opportunities for investigation, for example, in Year 4, exploring the different design of torches before the design process begins. Discussion with pupils shows that they are developing a range of techniques and skills in this subject. For example, the pupils in Year 6 had an opportunity earlier in the year to use a range of materials and tools to make puppets and rockets.
117. The subject leader is new to post and has had insufficient time to develop this area. However, the school is aware that design and technology is an area for future development, including developing the expertise and knowledge of staff and the introduction of a comprehensive scheme of work.

Music

118. Music was sampled during the inspection as only three lessons were seen. Therefore, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision. From discussions with the two subject leaders and the peripatetic music teachers and a scrutiny of resources, it is clear that improvements have been made since the last inspection. Published schemes of work have been introduced to both key stages with a view to improving teachers' subject knowledge and therefore the quality of teaching. The teaching observed was satisfactory and in one case very good. In the very good lesson, the teacher was clear about what she wanted the pupils to know and learn. She used correct musical terminology and showed the pupils how to play the chime bars properly. She reminded pupils of what they needed to do to improve their singing. The pupils worked well collaboratively to create some sounds to link with the story, The Iron Man, which the pupils were reading in literacy.
119. From the lessons and assemblies, singing is at least in line with national expectations. The infant choir have recently been successful at the Crosby Festival of Music and Dance. They were the only infant choir to enter and were awarded third prize. The adjudicator made these positive comments "A very well disciplined choir... clear words and a sense of shape ... a group with so much potential for the future." All pupils have a chance to perform in school productions and concerts. A small number of junior pupils are taught the guitar, violin, flute and clarinet at lunchtimes by peripatetic music teachers. However, no pupils appear to play the recorder within school.

120. Pupils listen to music in assemblies, and in the infant assembly, the title, composer and instrument were briefly spoken about. This did not happen in the junior assembly and was a lost opportunity.
121. The subject is well led by the two subject leaders. They are clear that standards need to rise and they have a comprehensive action plan to help them achieve this. They have put much time and effort into supporting other staff and providing guidance for them. New instruments, some of which reflect a range of cultures, have been bought. There is still a need for more untuned percussion instruments so that all pupils within a class have an opportunity to play.

Physical education

The provision in physical education is **very good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in aspects of physical education (PE) are well above national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The subject is very well led.
- The very good facilities contribute strongly to the well above average standards.
- Teaching and learning are very good and almost all pupils are very positive about the subject.

Commentary

122. Only one lesson in PE was observed in the infant classes and so it is not possible to make judgements about standards achieved by the end of Year 2. Standards by the end of Year 6 in swimming and athletics are well above the national expectations and almost all pupils achieve really well in individual lessons and over time. Many pupils also benefit from belonging to sporting clubs outside of school, adding to their overall performance. Standards have improved further from the above average standards reported at the time of the last inspection.
123. By the end of Year 6, standards in swimming are well above national expectations. Around one third of the pupils demonstrate high standards in stroke technique. Almost all pupils are secure in swimming 25 metres, and the majority have obtained certificates for survival, with almost half achieving Advanced Survival awards. Pupils are taught swimming in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, which is much greater provision than the national picture. However, this does place some strain on time allocated to other aspects of the PE programme. Pupils in Year 3 have developed very good awareness of techniques in athletics, including sprinting, baton changing and lane discipline, and by Year 5, some are demonstrating excellent techniques in the demanding skills of triple jumping. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of fitness and how to prepare and care for their bodies in terms of physical exercise. The school's own records indicate standards in gymnastics and games are also above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Dance is less well developed and has been identified by the school as an area for development.
124. All the teaching and learning observed in the junior years was very good. The teachers, including the specialist swimming teacher, showed very good subject knowledge, enthusiasm for the subject and high expectations of the pupils. Lessons are prepared very well. One very good Year 5 lesson benefited from meticulous preparation by the teacher, ensuring pupils moved rapidly through a succession of increasingly demanding activities. This led to very good learning by almost all the pupils, save a small minority for whom it was too demanding. Lessons are planned jointly by year group teams, helping to ensure consistent high quality experiences for all pupils. Pupils respond well to the lessons and work well individually and collaboratively, sustaining effort and many showing very good commitment and a competitive instinct. There is an established and effective whole school system for assessing pupils' attainment in PE.

125. The subject is very well led. The subject leader has very good specialist subject knowledge, enthusiasm and personal interest which effectively inspires pupils and colleagues. He has given a very good lead on curriculum development and is actively pursuing the Sports Active-Mark award for the school. The very good facilities contribute strongly to the overall levels of achievement. The school offers a good range of after-school clubs related to PE for boys and girls and pupils take part in local competitions and matches. The school also has close links with several local and nationally respected sporting organisations, helping to maintain the interest and profile of the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

126. Only one observation of a personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship lesson was observed during the inspection, and very little recorded written work was available, so it is not possible to make a judgement on the overall provision, standards achieved nor the quality of teaching and learning within the subject. However, successful PSHE has been, and continues to be, a high priority within the school and is integrally bound up with the overall caring ethos and with the teaching and learning across the curriculum. The pupils' personal, moral and social awareness are very good. They understand right and wrong, their responsibilities to each other, members of the school community and beyond and the consequences of their own actions. Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good; consequently, pupils are confident to voice any concerns in a trusting and secure environment. In the Foundation Stage, children's achievement in personal, social and emotional development is very good.
127. The teaching of PSHE is an integral part of the life of the school and contributes well to the very good development of pupils' attitudes and values. Personal, social and health education are seen as important elements by the school, and curriculum experiences are taught both discretely and integrally within other lessons. Whilst teachers take opportunities to develop PSHE elements integrally within other lessons, the use of 'circle time' as a vehicle for teaching the subject at times slows the pace of learning and limits pupils' participation and learning. The pupils have produced very little recorded work, making it difficult for teachers, pupils and others to monitor their progress. Pupils who are seen as having special emotional or behavioural needs are carefully monitored and their progress is recorded. However, there is no whole school system for assessing and recording achievement in PSHE which could be used to provide help and guidance at critical periods during pupils' time at the school. Aspects of the curriculum are in need of strengthening, particularly drug awareness education in the junior years. There are some useful curriculum materials. The school acknowledges the need to develop these draft materials further. The subject leader is interested and committed to the subject but there are limitations to the time she is available to advise and lead colleagues.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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