

INSPECTION REPORT

BANKS ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104516

Headteacher: Mrs S Devereux

Lead inspector: Mr D S Roberts

Dates of inspection: 5 – 7 May 2004

Inspection number: 263579

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	202
School address:	Banks Road Garston Liverpool Merseyside
Postcode:	L19 8JZ
Telephone number:	0151 427 4360
Fax number:	0151 494 9716
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Hepple

Date of the previous inspection: 19 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Banks Road Primary is an average sized school, which provides education for 202 pupils from three to 11 years of age, including 26 children who attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is over 60% and well above the national average. The school is situated in an area of significant social disadvantage, and benefits from national initiatives, such as Excellence in Cities and Educational Action Zone. A significant number of pupils join the school at times other than the normal point of entry. In the last Year 6 group to take the National Curriculum tests, less than 80 per cent of the pupils had attended Year 2 at the school. The number of pupils on roll has fallen since the last inspection when 263 pupils attended the school. This is due to the demolition of houses, as part of a major regeneration programme in the area. At present just under four per cent of pupils are from families belonging to minority ethnic groups, none of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils on the register for special educational needs is above the national average. On entry to the school, the intake of children represents a wide range of ability, but overall attainment levels are well below those found nationally and consistent with those found at the time of the previous inspection. The school has Investors in People status. It achieved the Healthy School's award and School Achievement Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1743	D S Roberts	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language
19669	F Kennedy	Lay inspector	
14459	G Owen	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History
7222	A Watson	Team inspector	Music Religious education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school, which provides very good value for money. It provides a high level of care for its pupils and is very successful in promoting their academic and all round-development. Teaching of a generally high quality enables most pupils to achieve very well, in relation to their capabilities, particularly in the key areas of learning. The school works very successfully to ensure that all pupils are included and involved in all aspects of the curriculum. It provides a secure, supportive and happy learning environment, and is highly regarded by its pupils, their parents and the local community.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- High quality provision at the early stages of learning, in Nursery and Reception classes, gives children a very good start to their education.
- By Year 6, pupils acquire a very good grasp of key skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Teaching in the key areas of learning is particularly effective.
- The curriculum is very successful in providing for the needs of all pupils.
- Very positive attitudes to learning by the pupils contribute significantly towards their high achievement.
- The quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher is very good.
- In mathematics, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to use and apply their skills in everyday situations.
- In some classes, insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills in scientific enquiry.

The school has made very good progress in addressing the key issues identified by the previous inspection. National Curriculum test results for the last four years indicate a rate of improvement, by the end of Year 6, which is above the trend found nationally.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils throughout the school generally achieve very well in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. Having entered the school with generally well below average attainment levels, children at the Foundation Stage, in Nursery and Reception classes, make rapid progress. Most achieve the appropriate goals in all of the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, achieve well in relation to their capabilities. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening and reading are close to the average for pupils' age. A majority of pupils achieve appropriate levels in writing and mathematics, although overall standards fall short of those found nationally. This is a broadly similar picture to the average National Curriculum test results for the last three years. Older pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics, where standards by Year 6 are above those found nationally, and generally consistent with average National Curriculum test results. In the most recent national tests, the pupils' performance in English was very high compared with those in similar schools. Pupils achieve well in science, where standards are generally appropriate for the pupils' ages. The picture in science is better than that indicated by the most recent national test results for Year 6, although consistent with

the average over the last three years. Throughout the school, pupils achieve very well in relation to their capabilities in information and communication technology (ICT), where standards by the end of Year 6 are above the average for age. In all other subjects, pupils' achievement is generally good and some of the work produced in art and design is of particularly good quality. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve highly, and make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

Pupils show very good attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn, work very productively, and involve themselves enthusiastically in the rich variety of learning opportunities on offer. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally promoted very successfully, and standards of behaviour are high. The pupils' attendance is satisfactory.** Hard work by the school since the last inspection has improved attendance rates. They now match the local education authority averages, although continuing to fall short of the average found nationally.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **very good**. The school makes very good provision for its pupils through formal and extra-curricular activities. High quality provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, and the school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equality of access to all aspects of provision. Overall, the teaching is **very effective**. High quality teaching at the Foundation Stage, in Nursery and Reception Classes, gives children a very good start to their education and promotes very good learning and achievement in all areas of the curriculum. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds effectively on pupils' prior learning, helping them to achieve good standards in relation to their capabilities. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is generally very effective, and regularly of high quality towards the end of the school. It provides pupils with a very good grasp of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Throughout the school, teaching assistants co-operate effectively with class teachers, and make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Their work in supporting pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective in promoting high achievement by the pupils. The effective use of assessment to help pupils to improve is a strong feature in the teaching of key skills, which contributes significantly towards the pupils' very good achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. Very good leadership is provided by the headteacher, who sets the tone for this school. She demonstrates a strong sense of urgency to make the best possible provision for her pupils, and is strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, senior management team and all of the staff. The highly committed governing body works very successfully with the headteacher to provide clear educational vision and direction for the school, and ensure that all statutory requirements are met fully.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very high regard for the school. They feel that the teaching is good, and their children are expected to work hard and make good progress. Pupils enjoy school. They say that they are expected to work hard, and appreciate the help that their teachers give them to make progress.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Create regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply their increasing mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems arising from everyday situations.
- Increase the emphasis placed on developing pupils' skills in scientific enquiry, ensuring that appropriate opportunities are created in all classes for pupils to engage in investigative and experimental activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve **high standards** in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment during their time at the school. The attainment of children on entry to the Nursery is well below average. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, standards in the key skills (literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology) are above average for the pupils' age. The school's success in promoting very good achievement was recognised by the School Achievement Award in 2003.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in Nursery and Reception classes settle quickly and achieve very well in relation to their capabilities.
- By the end of Year 6, very effective teaching helps pupils to achieve standards which are above average for their age in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, the school has been very successful in raising standards in reading and writing.
- Very good resourcing and highly effective teaching enables pupils, at all levels of attainment, to achieve very well in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Very good provision enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well.
- In other subjects, the pupils achieve well, and some of the work produced is of high quality.

Commentary

- 1 The high quality provision made by teachers and support staff for children at the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) helps children to settle quickly and achieve very well in relation to their capabilities. Most achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals in all of the areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1. Their personal, social and emotional development is promoted very effectively, helping them to settle quickly and express themselves with increasing confidence. This contributes significantly to their particularly good progress in the areas of learning concerned with communication, language and literacy, and their mathematical development.
- 2 During their time in the school, pupils at all levels of attainment generally achieve very well in English and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards for their age are appropriate in speaking and listening and reading, but slightly below the national average in writing and mathematics. This is generally consistent with the average National Curriculum test results for the last three years. By the end of Year 6, standards for age are above average in English and mathematics and broadly consistent with the average National Curriculum test results for the last three years. The most recent national test results show the pupils' performance in English to be above that of pupils in all schools and very high compared with the average for similar schools. Their performance in mathematics was well above the average for those in similar schools. Throughout the school, very effective teaching, the good work of support staff, and the very successful implementation of the national strategies for both subjects are important factors in the pupils' very good achievement. The school has made very good progress in raising standards of reading and writing, identified as areas for improvements in the last inspection.
- 3 Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in science, and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are similar to the average found nationally. This is a significantly better picture than that indicated by the most recent National Curriculum test results, but consistent with the average national test results taken during the last three years. Good teaching in science enables pupils to make particularly good progress in extending their scientific knowledge and

understanding. Progress in scientific enquiry, although satisfactory overall, is less consistent, due to the lack of emphasis placed on this aspect of science in some classes.

- 4 Taken over four years, National Curriculum test results indicate an overall rate of school improvement which is similar to the national trend by the end of Year 2, and above the trend found nationally by the end of Year 6. The same results indicate no significant variations in the performance of pupils in terms of gender.
- 5 In ICT, pupils throughout the school achieve very well in relation to their capabilities, and standards for their age are average by the end of Year 2, and above average by the end of Year 6. Most pupils progress very well in all aspects of the subject, developing good skills in communication and handling information, and extending significantly their knowledge, understanding and skills in control technology. Pupils benefit greatly from very good resourcing of ICT, which contributes significantly to the very effective teaching they receive.
- 6 In all other subjects, pupils generally achieve good standards in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. Some of the work produced in art and design and design and technology is of high quality. In physical education, pupils benefit from a well-planned programme of work. Most achieve at least appropriate standards for their age by the age of 11, and a significant proportion achieve higher standards, particularly in games and swimming.
- 7 Throughout the school, teachers and support staff work very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, in terms of gender, race and levels of attainment. This enables most pupils, including those who are particularly gifted, to achieve very well in relation to their capabilities. Well planned support by teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve highly and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (12.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (28.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.2 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils show **very good** attitudes to learning. They work hard and participate enthusiastically in all school activities. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils benefit considerably from the very good provision made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Pupils benefit from the very good provision that is made for promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Punctuality is good.
- The school is strongly committed to improving further the pupils' rates of attendance.

Commentary

- 8 The school has built successfully on the many positive features identified in the last inspection report. Behaviour throughout the school is now very good. The pupils enjoy school. They approach their work and play with real enthusiasm. Pupils' attitudes to learning are particularly good in Year 5 and Year 6, where the pupils show considerable maturity towards their work and in their general demeanour. There were no exclusions during the past year.
- 9 In the Nursery and Reception classes, close attention is given to promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development. Teachers and support staff provide many opportunities for the children to express their feelings and to develop an understanding of acceptable behaviour and an increasing sensitivity to the feelings and needs of the other children.
- 10 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' moral development. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and they themselves decide upon the rules for their class. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils are caring and friendly towards one another and courteous to staff and to visitors. They play together amicably in the playground and behave very well in the dining room, where school lunch is an enjoyable social occasion. During the inspection, the pupils' behaviour in assembly was exemplary. They listened attentively and joined in the prayers reverently. A sense of spirituality was evoked when the pupils were given a few moments to reflect on their friendships and ways in which they might show kindness and helpfulness to their friends and to people who might be feeling lonely.
- 11 Pupils support each other well in class, while Year 6 prefects and others lower down the school carry out their duties throughout the day very responsibly, helping to create a strong sense of community. It is evident from the pupils' attitudes that they enjoy taking responsibility. For example, the team of pupils helping in the dining room behaved impeccably and took a real pride in setting the tables for the Reception children and distributing water to all the tables. All the pupils are proud of their school. The building and grounds are immaculate and the many high quality displays that enhance the learning environment are treated with great care.
- 12 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' all-round development. Through religious education lessons, the pupils steadily increase their knowledge and awareness of faiths and cultures that are a part of their own multi-cultural society. A very rich programme of visitors to the school, for example church leaders, artists, poets and musicians, and the many educational visits to places of cultural, historical and geographical interest, strongly support the pupils' personal, social and cultural development. A wide range of extra curricular activities, inter-school sports competitions, the annual Shakespearean production by Year 6 and the residential visits organized for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils also strongly support the pupils' all-round development and help to make learning fun.
- 13 Since the last inspection the school has worked hard and successfully, in close co-operation with the educational welfare service, to raise levels of attendance and to improve punctuality. Registers are marked properly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and a

distinction is now made between authorised and unauthorised absence. The pupils' record of attendance is satisfactory showing an improvement since the last inspection. Overall attendance rates now match the Local Education Authority averages, although falling short of those found nationally. Most absence is due to illness, and the incidence of unauthorised absence is below the national median. Punctuality is now good. The great majority of the pupils arrive on time in the mornings and lessons start promptly. In cases where parents are having difficulty in getting their children to school on time, the school arranges for them to be brought to school by the learning mentor, should the parents so wish.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.4
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **very good**. The school provides a very good quality curriculum, and works very effectively to promote its pupils' academic and all-round development.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are generally of **very good quality**, and effective arrangements are in place for assessing pupils' progress. Teaching is particularly effective in promoting the key skills of learning. This means that pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in extending their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching at the Foundation Stage, in Nursery and Reception classes, is generally of a high quality, providing children with a very good start to their education.
- Throughout the school, teaching is usually very effective in promoting the key skills of learning in English, mathematics and ICT.
- The highly effective use made of ICT to support teaching and learning is a very strong feature in the school.
- Support staff co-operate very effectively with class teachers, and make an important contribution to pupils' learning and progress.
- Good assessment procedures help teachers and support staff to ensure that pupils work to their potential in the key areas of learning.
- Teachers create stimulating classroom environments, which encourage and motivate their pupils.
- In science, some teachers create insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their enquiry skills.

Commentary

- 14 In Nursery and Reception classes, highly effective teaching helps children to settle quickly and make a very good start to their education. The strong emphasis placed on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development, helps them to develop confidence, and this in turn contributes to their very good achievement in all of the areas of learning.
- 15 Throughout the school, very good teaching in English, mathematics and ICT, helps pupils to make rapid progress in acquiring the key skills of learning. The pupils' high achievement in these areas led to the school gaining the School Achievement Award in 2003. In English and mathematics, the very good use made of guidance provided by the national strategies for

literacy and numeracy helps teachers to challenge pupils well. Teaching is of at least good quality throughout the curriculum, and the pupils' good grasp of basic skills assists their learning in all subjects.

- 16 Highly effective use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboard facilities to introduce lessons and to present and explain new learning. In addition, pupils use ICT confidently to support their learning in different subjects. The effective use of assessment information is a strong feature in the teaching of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Good use is made of assessment information to plan future work. This means that teachers' planning is very effective in challenging pupils at all levels of attainment to work towards their potential.
- 17 Throughout the school, teachers and support staff work together very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. The very good support provided for pupils with special educational needs, helps them to make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Very good classroom management contributes greatly towards high standards of behaviour and the purposeful atmosphere which exists in the school. The staff work hard and very effectively to create stimulating classroom environments. The very good partnership with parents contributes significantly towards pupils' progress. Parents are informed of areas to be covered in various subjects during the term ahead, enabling them to play a part in their children's learning. However, there is some variation between classes in the more formal setting of homework as a systematic extension of work completed in school.
- 18 Teachers are very successful in making all pupils feel valued, taking account of their needs in terms of gender, race, prior attainment and background. Much care is taken to ensure that all pupils are included and involved in all aspects of learning. The highly effective use made of displays of pupils' work is a very strong feature throughout the school, helping to create a rich and stimulating learning environment.
- 19 The teaching of science is generally good, and is particularly effective in extending the pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding. Although some teachers are very effective in promoting pupils' skills in scientific enquiry, this is not a consistent feature. In some year groups, teachers create too few opportunities for pupils to develop such skills through practical activities as part of experimental and investigative work.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17 (50)	15 (44)	2 (6)	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a **very good** curriculum. There is a broad range of opportunities offered that cater for the needs of all pupils. Strong support is provided for learning outside the classroom and many activities are organised to enhance the pupils' learning. Resources are generally good and accommodation is of high quality. Teaching and support staff are well qualified to provide for pupils' needs in all areas of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision is made for children at the Foundation Stage.
- The school provides a fully inclusive curriculum.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next the next stage of their education.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' participation in sport.
- Information technology is used well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday situations.
- In science, insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills in scientific enquiry.

Commentary

- 20 A high quality curriculum is provided for children at the Foundation Stage. The children's development is promoted very successfully in all six nationally agreed areas of learning, and particularly strong emphasis is placed on helping the children to acquire confidence and good social skills, and to acquire a good early grasp of language and mathematical skills.
- 21 Throughout the school, the curriculum is well planned and structured and good use is made of assessment information in English and mathematics to set targets for improvements for individual pupils. The curriculum for these two subjects is based securely on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, which are often adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. There are clear policies providing teachers with useful guidance, ensuring that statutory requirements are met. Each subject is given an appropriate amount of time, and teachers and support staff work together very effectively to ensure that all pupils are involved and fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. Close attention is given to the pupils' particular needs in terms of gender, race and prior attainment. The highly inclusive nature of curricular organisation results in very good provision for all pupils. There is a genuine commitment to promote equality of access for all pupils, which is regularly reflected in teachers' questioning during whole-class elements of lessons, and in the organisation of learning activities. Since the last inspection, the contribution of ICT to pupils' learning across the whole curriculum has increased significantly. This, together with the improved use of assessment information to plan more challenging work for pupils, contributes significantly to their improved progress and achievement.
- 22 Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. This represents significant improvement since the previous inspection, when provision was judged to be satisfactory. Effective systems have been established for the early identification of specific needs, and provision is monitored on a regular basis. Individual education plans are of a very good quality, easily accessed and reviewed regularly. Increasing attention is given to particularly gifted and talented pupils who are carefully identified and supported effectively.
- 23 Provision for personal and social development is very good. Strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' understanding of the dangers of alcohol and drug misuse, and promoting an understanding of sex education and relationships. The close attention given to encouraging pupils to take an interest in their health was recognised by The Healthy Schools Award, achieved in 2003. Honesty, fairness and respect for truth are consistently reinforced and good behaviour is encouraged on a daily basis by all staff. The school's values are clearly visible around the school and in the mutual respect shown by adults and pupils alike. The curriculum prepares pupils very well for the next stage in their education and teachers work closely with staff in the receiving school in order to ensure a smooth transition at age eleven. The very good provision of opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities contributes significantly towards the development of pupils' confidence and self esteem.

- 24 The curriculum contributes very effectively towards the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is generally of high quality. Pupils often respond with awe and wonder to aspects of their studies, such as the wonders of modern technology and the study of the human body in science. Work in subjects such as ICT and art and design requires close co-operation between pupils to solve problems, and consequently fosters good social skills. Much of the work in English, geography, history and art and design, contributes significantly towards increasing the pupils' awareness and understanding of their own and other cultures.
- 25 Although overall provision in mathematics has improved significantly since the previous inspection, not enough attention is given to providing pupils with challenges that require them to apply their increasing mathematics knowledge and skills to solve problems arising from everyday situations. In science, overall provision is good, but insufficient emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' skills in scientific enquiry.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides its pupils with a **very high** level of care and gives them **very good** support and guidance. Staff pay careful attention to pupils' views and concerns.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a safe and healthy environment are very good.
- Pupils are provided with very good support, advice and guidance.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Child protection procedures are very good.

Commentary

- 26 The school provides a very good level of care for its pupils. Since the last inspection the school has moved into a new high quality building in which standards of caretaking are very good. All areas of the building are fully accessible to parents and pupils with disabilities. Pupils now have a large playground, which is well maintained, and children in the Nursery have a secure outdoor play area. Risk assessments of the building and grounds are carried out by the governors at regular intervals. The school achieved 'Healthy School' status in 2003, for high standards in a number of areas, including personal, social and health education and the school's physical and social environment.
- 27 Very good induction procedures help the youngest children to settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception class routines. Parents are given detailed information about the areas of learning for children of this age, which helps them to prepare their children for starting school. Throughout their time in the school the pupils are provided with very good support and guidance. Their academic and all-round development is carefully monitored and any specific needs are quickly identified.
- 28 Child protection procedures are very good. The designated teacher and the appointed governor receive appropriate training and ensure that staff have a thorough knowledge of the local education authority's guidelines. The school is given very strong support from the school nurse and the educational welfare officer in matters concerning the pupils' health, attendance and general welfare.
- 29 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. At the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors the parents spoke very highly of this aspect of the school. A learning mentor, funded by the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative, supports pupils who, for a variety of reasons, are in need of additional attention.

- 30 Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils are kind, friendly and very well behaved. Staff listen carefully to pupils' views and ideas and incorporate them into plans, for example for the design of the school playground and for fund raising activities. Together with their teachers the pupils formulate their own classroom rules, an important feature in the whole school behaviour policy. A designated member of staff has responsibility for 'listening' to pupils who have concerns about bullying. Before and during the inspection, the parents voiced strong appreciation for the very effective way in which the school responds to any concerns raised by the pupils or their parents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established a **very good** partnership with parents, other local schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information for parents about school events, the curriculum and ways in which they might support their children's learning.
- Links with the community and other local schools contribute very effectively to the quality of education the school provides.
- Arrangements for dealing with parents concerns and complaints are very good.
- The school provides good quality information for parents about their children's standards and progress.

Commentary

- 31 The overall quality of the information provided for parents is very good. Through the prospectus, the governing body's annual report, the school magazine and general correspondence parents are kept fully informed in relation to the life and work of the school. A very helpful 'How to Help your Child at Home' booklet provides parents with information about the planned curriculum for the term. This helps parents to make a good contribution to their children's learning. Formal parents' meetings, twice a year, provide suitable opportunities for parents to discuss their children's standards and progress with class teachers. Pupils' annual reports are well written and provide detailed information about attainment and progress.
- 32 Parents have many opportunities to talk to the headteacher and class teachers informally. Nursery and Reception parents bring their children into the classroom in the morning and talk freely to teachers and support staff. Parents of older pupils are able to speak to staff in the playground before school. The school's 'open door' policy, the approachability of teachers and the very effective way in which the school responds to parents' concerns were very highly praised by parents at the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors.
- 33 Parents and governors give strong support to the school by assisting in lessons and helping with school productions and the organization of fund raising events, school discos and Christmas parties. Many visitors from the local community, including religious leaders, police and fire officers, theatre groups, artists, musicians and sports coaches, make a very valuable contribution to the quality of education the school provides for its pupils.
- 34 The Education Action Zone initiative has given the school access to a wide range of resources within the local community. Pupils have benefited from involvement with the work of the local Housing Association, a project in a nearby car factory and a Mini Masterchef competition, organized by the local high school in conjunction with a hotel in Speke. Experiences such as these strongly support the pupils' personal development and introduce them to the world of work.

- 35 Very good links have been established with other local schools. Sixth formers from a local school support the work in religious education by coming in to talk to the pupils about Judaism. The school works very closely with the high school to which the vast majority of the pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. The school's involvement in training new practitioners is a very good feature in provision, and strong links have been established with providers of initial teacher training. Year 6 pupils are currently involved in a transition project, working with Year 7 pupils in connection with the refurbishment of St. George's Hall in the city centre. The school has links with a primary school in Madrid, arranged through the Bilingual School Project and administered by the British Council. Staff from the local high school provide valuable support for the school in this enterprise.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **very good**, showing continuing improvements since the last inspection. Very effective leadership is provided by the headteacher, who sets the tone for this school and demonstrates a strong sense of urgency to make the best possible provision for the pupils. Very good leadership is provided by others in key positions. The deputy headteacher and senior management team work very effectively to ensure that all aspects of provision operate successfully. The highly effective governing body works closely with the headteacher to provide clear vision and educational direction for the school. Governors are very successful in providing an equitable and inclusive school where every child matters.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective co-operation between the headteacher and senior management team contributes significantly towards the high quality of education.
- Committed and hard working governors make a significant contribution to the leadership and management of the school.
- Strong emphasis is placed on the professional development of staff at all levels.
- Since the last inspection, significant improvements in procedures for monitoring teaching and learning have had a positive effect on curricular provision and pupils' achievement.
- Effective strategic planning results in very good resourcing and very effective use of staff.
- Very effective arrangements for analysing and tracking pupils' progress contribute significantly towards their very good achievement.

Commentary

- 36 The purposeful leadership provided by the headteacher is an important factor in the high quality of education provided by the school. The headteacher and senior management team are strongly supported by a highly motivated staff. The school has an outstanding record of staff attendance, which reflects the very positive ethos for learning in the school. The award of Investors in People status for the last three years indicates the success of leadership and management in creating a climate conducive to achieving success as a school. The School Achievement Award, presented in 2003 reflects how pupils have benefited from such a supportive environment and the high quality of education provided for them.
- 37 Governors are entirely successful in meeting all statutory requirements. They work very effectively with the headteacher to ensure that the school provides equality of opportunities for all pupils, and that their needs are met fully taking account of varying requirements in terms of gender, race and ability. Governors show a very good awareness of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Governing body initiatives take full account of the principles of best value. A good illustration of this was provided during the process of building the new school. The governing body's determination to secure the best possible provision for the pupils was an important factor in achieving the high quality accommodation which now exists.

- 38 The very effective management of all resources makes an important contribution towards the high quality of provision throughout the curriculum. The resourcing of ICT is an outstanding feature in the school, contributing significantly towards enhancing pupils' learning in all subjects. The headteacher and governing body, together with the highly efficient school administration, ensure very effective financial management of all resources. This was confirmed by the most recent audit of finance carried out by the local education authority.
- 39 Strong emphasis is placed on improving the skills of all staff. Since the last inspection, for example, close attention has been given to the training of teaching assistants. The value of such initiatives is reflected in the improved support provided for pupils and their increasingly good achievement, particularly in the key areas of learning.
- 40 Since the last inspection, the school has worked very successfully to strengthen the role of co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of provision. The headteacher and senior management team, together with co-ordinators for the key areas of learning, regularly monitor teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. Lessons are observed at regular intervals. Criteria for observation are shared with teachers in advance, and feedback is provided. The information from lesson observations contributes towards agreed targets for improvements as part of performance management. Good procedures are in place for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. They help to ensure that pupils at different levels of attainment are challenged and extended appropriately as they move through the school. Since the last inspection, the increasingly constructive contribution of support staff, including the learning mentor, has helped to overcome barriers to learning which restrict the progress of a minority of pupils.
- 41 The school's commitment to high quality provision is reflected in the richness of the learning environment. All areas of the school are well maintained by a very efficient caretaker and cleaning staff. The quality of the learning environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work, which are of a high standard and used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievement, support their learning and encourage further enquiry.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	628,123
Total expenditure	607,336
Expenditure per pupil	2,606

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	58,970
Balance carried forward to the next	55,657

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision at the Foundation Stage, in the Nursery and Reception classes is **very good**.

Starting from a very low baseline on entry to the Nursery, most children make very good progress in all areas of learning during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes. The majority are on course to achieve the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Very good teaching and careful monitoring of each child's progress ensures that all the children experience a full and rich learning programme that is very closely matched to their needs and interests. Highly effective leadership and management by the very knowledgeable co-ordinator has a very positive effect on provision at the Foundation Stage. Parents are regularly involved in children's learning and in helping them to overcome particular difficulties.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching enables children to achieve very well.
- A supportive atmosphere is provided, in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge.
- Very good progress is made by most children from a very low baseline.

Commentary

42 The children make a very good start to their education in the Nursery. They are helped to settle quickly and develop increasing confidence in expressing themselves. In the Nursery and Reception classes, very good teaching and highly effective teamwork between teachers and support staff creates a very caring and supportive atmosphere in which the children feel happy, secure and valued. Well planned role play activities, both indoors and outdoors, provide the children with opportunities to express their feelings, to share, to take turns and to develop increasing sensitivity to the needs of others. Whilst enjoying a tea party outside the Nursery Rhyme Castle in the Nursery, for example, the children were quick to realize that an extra chair was needed for another individual who wished to join them at the table. In a Reception lesson, the children listened attentively to a story entitled "Moppy is Angry", and were encouraged to talk about things that make them angry or sad. The lesson enabled the children to understand their own emotions and to empathise with others in the class. Teachers and other adults provide very good role models, treating the children with courtesy and respect and helping them to develop a good understanding of acceptable behaviour and what is right and wrong. Children with special educational needs are provided with very good support, and are fully included and involved in all Nursery and Reception activities. The very good provision made for the children's personal, social and emotional development enables them to achieve very good standards in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. Most achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A rich and stimulating learning environment provides many starting points for language development.
- Very good teaching makes highly effective use of role play to promote children's confidence in expressing themselves.
- Regular and imaginative use is made of songs and rhymes to support language development.

Commentary

43 The well organised and stimulating learning environment provides many useful starting points for conversation between children and adults, which extends the children's communication skills. Role play and singing activities are used very successfully to develop the children's language, and are often combined imaginatively. This was evident, for example, when a group of Nursery children taking on the role of builders, built a wall, using Lego blocks, during outdoor play. The wall was subsequently used as Humpty Dumpty's wall in the singing activity that followed. The theme was extended further when a group of children went on to write 'get well' cards for Humpty. Very good linking between activities is also a strong feature in the Reception class, where the teaching draws very effectively on children's practical experiences to promote significant progress in their language skills. Teaching is highly effective in both classes. Teachers incorporate communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in each area of learning. They assess and monitor the children's progress carefully to ensure that individual children are progressing well and that particular difficulties are identified quickly and addressed effectively. These are important factors in the children's rapid progress and very good achievement in these areas of learning, enabling most of them to reach the appropriate learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective teaching promotes very good achievement by most children.
- Children benefit from a variety of practical learning activities.
- Teachers and support staff are very effective in challenging children to work to their potential.

Commentary

44 Very good teaching enables children to make significant progress in this area of learning. Teachers use a wide range of strategies very effectively to capture children's interest and to promote learning. In the Nursery, for example, very effective use was made of a glove puppet to lead the children in reciting numbers from zero to 10. This encouraged the younger and lower attaining children to join in where they could, while older, more confident, children carried on enthusiastically, counting to 10 and back again to zero. As children progress, they benefit significantly from the increasing opportunities created for them to engage in practical activities, involving matching, sorting and sequencing a wide range of items, which extend their understanding of number very effectively. The consistent provision of well organised and meaningful learning activities in the Reception class contributes considerably to the children's rapid progress. During the inspection, for example, a group of children carried out simple mathematical number investigations in the car park, and were able to explain their findings to the whole class towards the end of the lesson. Teachers and support staff are very

successful in meeting the needs of children at different levels of attainment. Staff are adept at recognising and using opportunities in all of the areas of learning, to strengthen the children's counting skills, number recognition and knowledge and understanding of shape and position. This enables children to achieve very well in relation to their capabilities, and for most to reach the appropriate learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Rich and stimulating opportunities are provided for children to learn about the world around them.
- Children make increasingly confident use of computers.

Commentary

45 The very effective use of role-play from an early stage, enables children to gain a good insight into the roles played by different people in the community, such as police and fire officers, nurses and doctors. Teachers and the support staff interact well with the children during such activities, extending their knowledge of the work carried out by such people, by asking perceptive questions and making pertinent suggestions. Good opportunities are created for children to learn about the local area and people within the local community. A recent visit to a nearby café, for example, provided Reception children with valuable first hand learning experiences. It extended their geographical knowledge of the local area, supported their personal and social development and provided useful starting points for class discussion. Well selected computer programs provide good opportunities for children to increase their confidence and skills in using ICT to support their learning. In both classes, very effective teaching and a rich learning environment, enables children to make significant progress in learning about the world around them. Children at all levels of ability, achieve very well in this area of learning and most achieve the appropriate early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very effective** in promoting children's progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good improvements in provision have been achieved since the last inspection.
- Secure outdoor play area is used very effectively.
- Very good use is made of the school hall for lessons in the physical area of learning.
- Well planned learning activities help children to develop manipulative skills.
- Very good co-operation between teaching and support staff promotes very good achievement by the children.

Commentary

46 Outdoor provision has improved significantly since the last inspection. Children in the Nursery now have access to a secure outdoor play area, which is used very effectively to extend their physical development. Reception children also benefit greatly from using the Nursery outdoor play area and equipment during the lunch break. Well planned learning activities, in the Nursery and in Reception, help the children to develop good manipulative skills. The children use scissors, pencils, crayons and paint brushes safely and effectively. They use modelling materials imaginatively and competently, and show increasingly accurate control of the mouse, when working on the computer. Teachers in both the Nursery and Reception classes

make very good use of the school hall for lessons in the physical area of learning, enabling the children to make increasing progress in developing control over their bodies, and in improving their skills in hopping, running, jumping and responding to signals. The children use space well, and even the youngest can move around the hall safely and sensibly, showing due care and consideration for others. Very good co-operation between teachers, support staff, and parent helpers, ensures that the needs of all the children are met fully. Most of the children are on course to achieve the appropriate early learning goals before entering Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good experiences are provided to develop imaginative role play.
- Many opportunities are created for children to sing and play musical instruments.
- Regular opportunities are provided for children to draw, paint and use a variety of materials.

Commentary

47 Teachers and support staff provide a wide range of opportunities for children to dress up as different characters and use their imagination and acting ability. These activities contribute enormously to children's creative ability, as well as extending their confidence and communication skills. In addition, the regular and very effective use of songs and rhymes helps children to develop an early appreciation of music. The children have good access to a variety of percussion instruments. This was evident when Nursery children used them imaginatively as part of outdoor activities. In both the Nursery and in Reception classes, children benefit from many opportunities for drawing, painting, collage work and making models. Very colourful displays of the children's art work in classrooms and corridors, and work in children's files, indicate very good achievement in this area of learning. Most children achieve, and some exceed, the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from the strong emphasis placed on developing their phonic skills, and achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well, and standards are above the national average by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is generally very good.
- The effective work of support staff contributes significantly towards the rapid progress made by pupils at all levels of attainment.
- The quality of teaching benefits greatly from the very successful implementation of the National Literacy strategy.
- Highly effective use is made of ICT to present lessons and to enhance pupils' learning.
- Very good subject leadership and management contribute significantly towards high quality provision in the subject.
- The school has made very good progress in addressing the key issues identified by the last inspection.

Commentary

- 48 The very effective development of pupils' key skills in English is a major strength in the school. Children enter the school with language skills which are generally well below average. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are above those found nationally.
- 49 Pupils achieve well at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2). By the time they reach the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening and reading are similar to those found nationally. Most pupils make good progress in writing, although overall standards fall short of the national average. In the most recent National Curriculum Tests, the pupils' performance in reading was similar to the national picture and very high compared with that of pupils in similar schools. In writing, their performance was below the national average, but well above the average for those in similar schools. Pupils benefit from a very well planned programme of work and good teaching, which enables them to achieve well in relation to their capabilities. The very effective way in which their phonic skills are developed, enabling them to identify accurately and use effectively the sounds which make up words, contributes considerably towards pupils' significant progress in reading and writing.
- 50 Pupils at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), benefit from very good teaching and achieve high standards in relation to their capabilities. By Year 6, standards for age are above those found nationally. This is broadly consistent with the pupils' performance in the most recent National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6. These showed the pupils' performance to be well above the national average and very high compared with those in similar schools.
- 51 The pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed very successfully. Older pupils show a capacity to vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listener, and to use their skills confidently to express views or ask questions. Pupils read accurately and fluently with good expression, and derive great enjoyment from their reading. They talk confidently about their preferences, in terms of authors and types of books, and explain enthusiastically why they like particular characters in the various stories which they have read.
- 52 Writing skills are developed very effectively. By Year 6, most pupils have acquired a good handwriting style, their spelling is generally accurate, and punctuation is used appropriately

and effectively. A significant proportion of pupils work at levels which are clearly above those expected for their age. Their writing makes increasing use of adventurous vocabulary and is lively and imaginative. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to write at length and for different purposes. They demonstrate well developed skills in adapting their writing to suit different requirements and audience. The very effective use made of ICT to stimulate interest and enhance pupils' learning is a very strong feature in the subject. The autobiographies produced by older pupils, following the study of the biographies of some famous people, are of high quality and beautifully presented.

- 53 The very successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is an important factor in the very good progress made in the subject since the last inspection. Standards in reading and writing, identified as areas for improvement by the previous inspection, have improved considerably. Throughout the school, class teachers and good quality support staff plan and co-operate successfully to meet the particular needs of individuals and groups of pupils. They are highly successful in ensuring that all pupils are included and involved appropriately in all aspects of the subject, taking careful account of their particular needs in terms of gender and race. Very good provision is made for those with special educational needs, who make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The success of the increasing emphasis placed on helping gifted or talented pupils to make progress is reflected in their very good achievement and high motivation.
- 54 The subject is led and managed very effectively. This contributes significantly towards the high quality provision made in English. Very good curricular planning and careful assessment of pupils' progress also have a very positive effect on the very good achievement of pupils at all levels of attainment.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 55 Teachers make good use of opportunities to promote and extend pupils' literacy skills during work in other subjects. Reading and writing skills are extended considerably during work in subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education. The very effective use of ICT to support learning throughout the curriculum regularly contributes towards a growing vocabulary and increasingly effective use of reading and writing skills to search for information and record findings.

MATHEMATICS

The school makes **very good** provision in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Since the last inspection, standards throughout the school have improved significantly.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included and achieve very well in relation to their capabilities.
- Consistently high quality teaching promotes very good progress.
- Regular monitoring of teaching, pupils' learning and work produced, has a positive impact on standards of achievement.
- Teaching promotes very positive attitudes by pupils towards learning in mathematics.
- Very good use is made of ICT to support learning in the subject.
- Insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in everyday situations.

Commentary

- 56 Throughout the school, pupils' achievement in relation to their capabilities and prior attainment is very good. By the end of Year 2, standards for age are slightly below the national average. This is a weaker picture than that indicated by the most recent National

Curriculum test results, which showed pupils' performance to be similar to that found nationally and well above the average for similar schools. The variation in performance is due to the fact that there is a high proportion of pupils with SEN in the current year group.

- 57 By the end of Year 6, standards for age are above the national average. This is generally consistent with national test results taken over the last three years and represents very good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils throughout the school make very good progress. Basic skills are taught thoroughly, and most pupils have good recall of number facts, and understand and use mathematical vocabulary appropriately.
- 58 Pupils requiring additional support make very good progress. Class teachers are aware of their needs and provide work that is well matched to their abilities. Much care is taken to vary the difficulty of the questions asked in oral sessions to ensure that all pupils are fully included. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to the good progress made by all pupils.
- 59 The overall quality of teaching is very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The most successful lessons are characterised by lively introductions supported by the skilled use of information technology. This helps to capture pupils' interest and attention. A sharp pace is maintained throughout and teachers ask appropriately challenging questions that extend pupils' learning. Work is carefully prepared and is well matched to the abilities of the pupils. Regular testing to check pupils' progress is carried out very effectively, and the results are carefully monitored in order to identify areas for further improvements.
- 60 Very effective management of the pupils promotes very good standards of behaviour. The relationships between teachers and pupils are constructive and supportive. Pupils show positive attitudes, are often engrossed in their learning, and work hard on the tasks provided. The senior management team and co-ordinator co-operate effectively to ensure that the subject is well led and managed. Most aspects of mathematics are covered very effectively. However, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to consolidate and extend their learning by using their increasing mathematical skills to solve problems arising from everyday situations. The school recognises the need for greater emphasis to be placed on this aspect of the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 61 Opportunities for pupils to extend their mathematics skills in other areas of the curriculum are frequently offered. In science, for example, the work often calls for accurate measurements and careful recording of data. The pupils' very good grasp of the key skills in mathematics helps them to complete such tasks successfully.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, pupils generally achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
- The pupils' positive attitudes to learning is an important factor in their good achievement.
- Teachers are particularly effective in developing pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding.
- ICT is used very effectively to enhance pupils' learning, which is a significant improvement on the last inspection.
- The subject is led and managed very effectively.
- Insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' scientific enquiry skills.

Commentary

- 62 Throughout the school, pupils' achievement is good in relation to their capabilities and prior attainment. By the time they are seven and 11 years of age, standards are broadly similar to those found nationally. This is a better picture than the most recent National Curriculum Test results, but consistent with national test results taken over the last four years. Teachers have good command of the subject and enable their pupils to achieve particularly well in extending their scientific knowledge and understanding. This was apparent when older pupils, focusing on the human body, looked closely at teeth. They drew well on prior learning and used appropriate scientific vocabulary to demonstrate their good knowledge and understanding of this aspect of their studies.
- 63 The very effective use of ICT to present and explain new learning is a very strong feature in the teaching. The interactive whiteboards and very well prepared material to introduce new concepts, capture pupils' interest in the topics being covered. Examination of work produced during the year included many examples of ICT being used very effectively to enhance pupils' learning. These included the selection of appropriate ICT generated graphs to present findings from investigations, and the use of sensors linked to the computer to measure heat loss during work on thermal insulation. The very good attitudes of pupils towards their work are also a strong feature. They are keen to learn, respond enthusiastically to questions from their teachers, and co-operate sensibly to solve problems when required to do so. Teachers and support staff co-operate very effectively to meet the varying needs of pupils and ensure that they are included and involved in all aspects of the work.
- 64 Although there are some good examples of teachers extending pupils' enquiry skills through well selected investigative and experimental work, this is not a consistent feature in all year groups. In some classes, insufficient emphasis is placed on this aspect of science. Consequently, pupils in these classes do not have enough opportunities to explore scientific ideas through practical activities, and do not learn effectively how to find the answers to scientific questions through systematic investigation.
- 65 The subject is led and managed very effectively. The knowledgeable co-ordinator observes teaching and learning on a regular basis and provides help and guidance for teachers. Recent monitoring accurately identified the need to increase the emphasis placed on scientific enquiry. Science is well resourced, and the programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective teaching promotes high standards of achievement by the pupils.
- Resources are of high quality.
- Highly effective subject leadership contributes considerably towards very good provision in the subject.
- The very effective use of ICT to support and enhance learning in other subjects is a strong feature throughout the school, and reflects significant improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

- 66 Pupils achieve very well, in relation to their capabilities and prior attainment, during their time in the school. By the end of Year 2, standards for pupils' age are appropriate. By Year 6, standards are above the average for age.
- 67 The pupils benefit from very effective teaching. Teachers and support staff work very hard to develop and maintain their own expertise, and their increasing confidence in ICT contributes

greatly towards the very good progress made by pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. A well-planned and challenging programme of work is well established throughout the school. The use of individual computer folders for all pupils to store their work is a very good feature, contributing to continuity in learning, and developing a sense of responsibility in pupils.

- 68 The pupils' ability to use ICT to present their work in ways which meets the requirements of particular purposes and audiences is a strong feature. They adjust the size, shape and colour of text confidently, and use illustrations and sound to enhance their presentations. They know how to communicate by e-mail, and benefit greatly from opportunities to exchange information with pen-pals in Spain. In other aspects of ICT, pupils make good use of spreadsheets as part of their work in science and mathematics, with higher attainers using formulae appropriately to change variables. During the course of the year, pupils extend their understanding of control technology, entering a set of information accurately to programme a screen image. Older pupils build effectively on the same principles to control external devices, such as fairground rides, connected to the computer. They benefit greatly from opportunities to engage in such work during residential visits to the Kingswood Centre in north Wales. The pupils' confidence and competence in using the internet means that information to support learning in various subjects is accessed quickly, so that the pace of lessons is rarely interrupted.
- 69 Teachers and support staff work together very effectively to ensure that all aspects of ICT are accessible to all pupils, and good care is taken to check that boys and girls enjoy the same opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very carefully and make good progress. Opportunities are also created during formal and extra curricular activities to ensure that higher attainers, and those that are particularly gifted, are set tasks which challenge and extend them appropriately.
- 70 The hard work and very effective leadership and management provided by the subject co-ordinator are important factors in the significant improvement in provision achieved since the last inspection. Teachers are provided with clear guidance, and benefit from regular training in new skills. The computer suite and good range of ICT learning resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, all help teachers to capture pupils' interest, challenge their thinking and extend their learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 71 Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support pupils' learning in work across the curriculum. This represents considerable improvement since the last inspection. Teachers make highly effective use of interactive whiteboards to present lessons. High quality, Powerpoint presentations of whole-class introductions to lessons in many subjects contribute significantly to pupils' high levels of motivation and keen interest in their work. Providing opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance learning is a systematic part of curriculum planning in most subjects. The fact that teachers are able to select from an increasing range of suitable resources and materials helps them to ensure that the ICT element is appropriately related to the main focus of lessons. In science, for example, the use of sensors connected to the computer to measure heat loss, during investigative work on thermal insulation, increases pupils' awareness of how ICT can be used to provide accurate measurement.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Extra-curricular activities provide very good opportunities for practical fieldwork in geography.
- The very good use made of ICT makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning in the subject.
- There is scope for more opportunities to be provided for pupils to extend their geographical enquiry skills.

Commentary

72 Pupils generally achieve well in relation to their capabilities and, by the ages of seven and 11, standards are average. Pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of places and their location. Although the development of geographical enquiry skills is not a consistent feature in the curriculum, a good example of this aspect of work was observed in a Year 5 lesson. Here, the pupils employed good fieldwork techniques to carry out a traffic survey and made accurate use of appropriate geographical language. The overall quality of teaching in geography is good, enabling most pupils to make good progress in relation to their prior learning. The very good use of ICT to support learning, as well as the opportunities for pupils to engage in fieldwork are good features in the teaching. Teachers manage the pupils very effectively, promoting very good standards of behaviour and a positive learning atmosphere. The pupils always display positive attitudes and co-operate well with each other and with their teachers. Geography is managed effectively and makes good provision for all pupils.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision is made for learning enrichment through visits to interesting destinations and talks by visitors to school.
- The very effective use of ICT makes a good contribution to learning in history and geography.
- The teaching is good.
- There is scope for more emphasis on historical enquiry.

Commentary

73 Pupils generally achieve well in relation to their capabilities and, by the ages of seven and 11, standards are appropriate. Pupils extend significantly their knowledge of historical events and people in the past. In a successful lesson observed in Year 5, for example, pupils showed a good knowledge of the demands placed on children in Victorian Britain, and of some of the arguments used by politicians at the time to initiate change. Pupils in Year 2 had worked on the Great Fire of London, and showed good recall of key facts related to the event. Throughout the school, pupils' learning is enhanced considerably by educational visits and the imaginative use of information technology. History is managed effectively and makes good provision for the pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets fully the requirements of the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus.
- Pupils acquire a good understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths.
- The quality of teaching is good.

Commentary

- 74 Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities and prior attainment. By Years 2 and 6, standards are appropriate for the pupils' age and similar to the last inspection. The programme of work meets fully the requirements of the new Liverpool Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of Christianity and the other major world faiths. Pupils benefit from educational visits to places of interest. During the inspection, for example, younger pupils visited a local church, and demonstrated good knowledge in identifying key features such as font, lectern and pulpit. The teaching in religious education is good and the subject is managed effectively.
- 75 In all three subjects, teachers and support staff successfully ensure that all pupils are included and involved in all aspects of the work, taking care to meet their particular needs in terms of gender, race and prior attainment.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

Provision in the subject is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is taught well.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of learning opportunities.
- Teachers make good use of the work of great artists to stimulate and inspire pupils.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

- 76 Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment achieve well. By the time pupils are seven and 11, standards in art are at least appropriate for the pupils' age and some of the work produced is of a high quality. The school has built effectively on the sound picture apparent at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities and make good use of a rich variety of media and materials. Teachers make particularly good use of the work of great artists to capture pupils' interest and enhance their skills. Visiting artists and artists in residence extend pupils' learning considerably and improve significantly the quality of their work. The subject is led and managed very effectively, ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are met fully.

Design and technology

- 77 Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement on provision. Examination of pupils' work produced prior to the inspection and discussion with teachers and pupils, indicate that the programme of work meets the

requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils achieve well, in relation to their capabilities. Standards for age are appropriate by the end of Years 2 and 6 and some of the work produced is of high quality. The programme of work places appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge skills and understanding in different aspects of the subject. Pupils show good skills in planning projects and in selecting and working effectively with a variety of tools and materials to complete products. The planning, designs and products examined, indicated that appropriate emphasis is placed on finishing techniques to achieve good quality, and that pupils evaluate finished products carefully, noting any ways in which improvements can be made. The subject is led and managed very effectively and meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit greatly from the expertise of a music specialist.
- The subject is well resourced.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Many pupils benefit considerably from participation in extra-curricular musical activities.

Commentary

78 Pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities and earlier attainment. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are appropriate in terms of pupils' age. Throughout the school, pupils benefit significantly from the teaching provided by a specialist musician. The fact that the normal class teachers stay in for music lessons means that they also benefit from the specialist teacher's expertise and this helps to raise the quality of the subject in general. The school has a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, which are used effectively to support learning. During the inspection, younger pupils were observed holding percussion instruments correctly, while keeping a steady pulse. They were able to adjust volume appropriately, playing quieter and louder as necessary. Older pupils use a wide range of percussion instruments, and many are able to perform individual compositions to a good standard. Good quality teaching successfully captures the attention of pupils, and motivates them to work hard. The subject is led and managed effectively, meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Physical Education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
- The overall quality of teaching observed was very good.
- The opportunities provided for pupils to take part in sport outside school are very good.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced.
- In a minority of lessons, insufficient attention is given to helping pupils to further improve their performance.

Commentary

79 Pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Most achieve appropriately for their age and some achieve above average standards particularly in games and swimming. All pupils,

regardless of gender, ability and race, are strongly encouraged and supported effectively. Good use is made of external expertise, for example, in football and rugby coaching. An impressive range of extra-curricular activities is offered, including opportunities for pupils to compete against local schools. In the lessons observed, pupils wore appropriate kit and were aware of safety requirements. Most of the lessons observed contained vigorous activity with very effective demonstration and guidance by the teacher. In these lessons, pupils were encouraged to reflect on their own performance and that of others, in order to improve. In a less effective lesson, weakness in the teacher's subject knowledge meant that insufficient attention was given to coaching and helping some of the pupils to improve further. The subject is led and managed very effectively. On-site facilities are limited, but the school makes full use of the space available including the multi-purpose school hall. The pupils display positive attitudes to the subject and acquire knowledge and skills in a planned and organised way. Many show a good understanding of fitness and health and appreciate the importance of practice in improving their performance.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

- 80 Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe lessons in this area of the school's work. Consequently, no judgements are made about overall provision. Careful examination of curricular planning, pupils' work completed previously and discussions with pupils, staff and parents, indicate that the school places strong emphasis on this aspect of its work. It provides a very good programme of work to promote pupils' personal, social and health education, paying particularly close attention to sex education, the dangers of drugs misuse, and the importance of a healthy diet. The school draws well on the support of outside agencies to help in this work, which helps pupils to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, confidence in mixing with others and to become caring and responsible citizens.

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	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	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	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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