

INSPECTION REPORT

REDGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Formby

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104885

Headteacher: Mrs W R Grime

Lead inspector: Mr C Smith

Dates of inspection: 7th - 8th June 2005

Inspection number: 267551

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: 5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 148

School address: Redgate
Formby
Liverpool
Merseyside

Postcode: L37 4EW

Telephone number: 01704 385960

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of
governors: Mr A Greenyer

Date of previous
inspection: November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Redgate Primary is a small school in Formby, Merseyside, catering for 148 pupils (75 boys and 73 girls) aged 4 to 11 years. The majority of children live in private housing but the school also serves an estate where houses are rented. Eleven per cent of the children have free school meals, which is average and the figure has been increasing in line with socio-economic changes in the area. Eighteen children (18 per cent) have special educational needs, which is average, and four children have statements. Pupils' special needs are largely related to learning, emotional and speech difficulties. Almost all of the children are white and English speaking. However, five children are from mixed backgrounds, there is one child from an Asian, one from a Caribbean and one from a Chinese background. Two children speak Russian as their native language. There are also four children from a travelling background. Pupil numbers have been stable over recent years but movement of families into the school is twice the national average. Moreover, many of the children moving into the school have special educational needs and the figure is rising. These factors have changed the character of the school considerably since the last inspection. There have also been a number of staff changes and three teachers of junior classes are new to the school this year. The school is involved in community provision for adult education and before and after school care. The school site is shared with the local authority consultants and the music service. The school gained an achievement award for improved results in 2001, the 'Active Mark Gold' award for provision in physical education in

2004 and an 'ECO' award in 2005. When children enter the school their attainment is wide ranging but is broadly typical for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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23887	Peter Nettleship	Team inspector	English Art and design Religious education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory with some good features, such as the rich curriculum provided which contributes to pupils' good personal development. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and are mainly good in the infant classes. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and very good in the reception class. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and the school provides sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very positive achievement in the reception and infant classes leads to high standards by Year 2;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and there is good achievement in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and physical education;
- The very good partnership with parents and the community benefits pupils' learning;
- Junior pupils are underachieving in science and there are weaknesses in their written work;
- Insufficient checking of teaching and learning, results in inconsistencies being overlooked.

Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. Standards in the reception and infant classes have remained high. Standards by Year 6 have declined. Pupils with special educational needs, joining the school later in their primary years, have had a negative effect on the overall results achieved in both English and mathematics. However, the fall in standards in science is more related to weaknesses in teaching. The school has improved standards in ICT and religious education. Other minor issues regarding daily collective worship and reporting fully to parents have been remedied. Although improvements have been made in checking the work of the school and informing pupils of how well they are performing, there are still inconsistencies in these areas.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	B	D	C
Mathematics	C	C	D	D
Science	A	E	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Reception children achieve very well and exceed the goals expected in all areas of learning. Infant pupils achieve well, particularly in Year 2, by which time they reach standards that are well above average and much higher than similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. The high standards in Year 2, apparent in the national assessments in 2004, are equally good this year. As the chart above shows, standards by the end of Year 6 have declined. In 2004, results in English and

mathematics were below average and lower than similar schools in mathematics and science. However, if the pupils who moved into the school later in their primary years are removed from the calculation, standards are at least a grade higher in all core subjects. Standards in Year 6, this year, are average in English and mathematics but are still below average in science. Junior pupils are underachieving in science, particularly the more able ones. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Although pupils achieve well in reading, there are weaknesses in the creative and imaginative aspects of writing and its presentation in some of the junior classes. Standards in ICT are at the levels expected and improving because pupils are now achieving well. Pupils also achieve well in art and design and in physical education.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, develop successfully. Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance is improving and is now higher than the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided, including teaching and learning, is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are very effective in the reception class. Children respond very positively to the many stimulating activities provided. Much of the teaching is good in the infant classes and in Year 5. In Years 2 and 5 particularly, the level of challenge is high and, because the tasks are always carefully matched to their different needs, all pupils learn successfully. Some good teaching takes place in all year groups, particularly when the whole class is taught together. The atmosphere for learning in most lessons is good and pupils concentrate on their work. However, inconsistencies arise when teachers give pupils' tasks to complete on their own. There are occasions when all pupils are given the same activity, irrespective of their different learning needs. This did not happen during the inspection, but it is apparent from pupils' books. When this happens, the more able pupils suffer most because their learning is not sufficiently extended. The learning of pupils with special educational needs, however, is successful, largely because of skilful teaching by well trained classroom assistants. Teachers have expertise in most subjects but not in the investigational aspects of science, which is why standards in this subject are low. Although pupils are now given targets for improvement, their work is not always marked constructively to help them to improve.

The school provides a good and rich curriculum. Some of the best learning takes place in foundation subjects, such as art and design and physical education. The school includes all pupils successfully in all activities and the very good range of out of school activities caters well for their diverse skills and talents. Attention is now being given to needs of the gifted and talented pupils. Pupils are well cared for and are encouraged to participate in school decision making. The school's very good relationships with parents strengthen pupils' personal development and their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school, including the contribution made by the headteacher, senior staff and governors, are satisfactory. Governors draw on their professional expertise well and provide very good financial management. Changes of staff this year have prompted a review of roles and responsibilities and led to the formation of a senior management team. As a result, teamwork is strengthening and communications between all parties is good. Adequate systems have been established to measure performance and check the work of the school. Subject leaders are now released to

investigate their subjects. However, although they have examined teachers' plans and pupils' work, not enough time has been spent checking teaching and learning in the classrooms and this is why some inconsistencies have gone unchecked.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents show a high degree satisfaction with the school and appreciate the efforts made for their children. Pupils are proud of the school and relish the opportunities to share in decision making.

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

- Raise standards of achievement in science in the junior classes;
- Improve the quality of junior pupils' written work, particularly the creativity and presentation;
- Inject more rigour into checking teaching and learning to eliminate the inconsistencies in marking and ensure a close match between pupils' learning needs and the activities provided.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Children achieve very well in the reception class and well in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall from Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Commendable achievement in the reception and infant classes leads to high standards by Year 2;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets;
- The standards achieved in Year 6 are adversely affected by pupils joining the school later;
- Pupils are underachieving in science and could do better in writing, from Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

1. Reception children get off to a flying start and soon become independent learners. Good reading, writing and number skills are acquired quickly and the stimulating activities provided develop their understanding and their physical and creative skills very successfully. By the end of the reception year virtually all children achieve, and many exceed, the learning goals expected in their language, mathematical, creative, physical and personal development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (17.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.4 (16.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (17.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Achievement is good in the infant classes, particularly in Year 2. Standards are rising well and are much higher than in similar schools. In the 2004 tests, results were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The current Year 2 pupils are reaching equally high standards because teaching is good. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are fluent readers and writers and are confident in handling numbers. They also benefit from the broad and rich curriculum provided and achieve well in subjects such as ICT, religious education, physical education and art and design.
3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The effective learning programmes and good levels of support provided enable them to achieve their learning goals. The care and attention given to the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language enable them to achieve well. The small number of children from travelling backgrounds benefit from catch-up programmes when they return. Teachers are now beginning to plan work specifically for the able,

gifted and talented pupils. Overall, they make satisfactory progress but there are still occasions when not enough is expected of them, particularly in relation to problem solving. The small number of pupils from different ethnic groups make similar progress to their peers.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.4 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.0 (27.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Results in Year 6 were high in all of the core subjects at the time of the last inspection. Since then results have fallen. The 2004 results were below average in English and mathematics, well below average in science and lower than in similar schools. However, increasing numbers of pupils have been moving in from other schools, many with special educational needs. In 2003 and 2004, only half of the pupils tested at the end of Year 6 had been present in the infant classes. If the pupils entering the school later were taken out of the calculation, the 2004 results would have been well above average in English and above average in mathematics. Standards in Year 6 are currently average in English and mathematics but only half of these pupils started in reception. Taking these factors into account, achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory in English, mathematics and religious education and good in ICT, physical education and art and design.
5. In science, standards in Year 2 are at the levels expected. However, standards in science were well below average in Year 6 in the 2004 tests. Standards are still below average this year, even when allowances are made for pupils joining the school later. Science has rightly been identified as an area for improvement. The weakness lies in pupils' inability to carry out scientific tests methodically. They also struggle to interpret charts and graphs of results. Teaching in this subject is not good enough and underachievement in science is an issue for improvement.
6. Pupils achieve well in reading and, by the end of Year 6, standards are much higher than in writing. The good phonic skills developed in the infant classes are built on well through regular home reading and reading for information in the junior classes. Achievement in writing is good in the infant classes but not good enough in some of the junior classes. Pupils' knowledge and skills in writing creatively and imaginatively are limited because much of the work in English is based on exercises. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write extensively and redraft to improve their work. Additionally, some teachers do not place enough emphasis on good presentation. Consequently, the appearance of pupils' work often does not do justice to the content. Underachievement in these aspects of writing in junior classes is another area requiring improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance, attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all good. The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are positive about all aspects of school life;
- The school has a positive ethos for learning;

- Pupils' spiritual growth and multicultural awareness receives attention but the school is rightly looking to strengthen these areas;
- Good attendance positively influences pupils' learning and their personal development.

Commentary

7. Pupils like coming to school. They get on well with each other and with adults. In the vast majority of lessons they behave well and concentrate on their learning. When lessons are fun and interesting, pupils are highly motivated. For example, Year 2 pupils were intensely curious when they examined different ways that photography can be used to capture a particular moment in time. Playtimes and lunchtimes are relaxed and pupils socialise and play together well. Pupils' pride in their school is demonstrated clearly when they participate in concerts and productions.
8. The school successfully promotes pupils' social and personal development. This is an integral element of the school's ethos. In addition to timetabled personal and social education lessons, the extensive range of well attended out of school activities nurtures their talents and interests very well. The school's good partnership with the Behaviour Support Unit is making a significant contribution to the harmonious atmosphere in the Year 5 classroom, despite the wide range of pupils' emotional needs. Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities have improved since the last inspection. The adventure playground came from a suggestion from the school council and members feel pleased and proud that they initiated it. The 'ECO' group take their responsibilities seriously and their efforts to create an attractive environment can be seen in the garden areas.
9. Pupils' social and moral development is good. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory, though opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage their spiritual awareness. Pupils' good knowledge of their own culture is evident in the colourful displays around the school. The school operates a policy to create racial harmony in the school and pupils show respect for other faiths and beliefs. Children in the reception class make a very positive start and many exceed the learning goals expected in their personal and social development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

10. There were no exclusions in the past school year.
11. Attendance has shown an improvement this year and is now higher than the national average. This is attributable to the pupils' enjoyment of school and to the parents' support in sending them to school regularly and on time. The computerised registration system is used well to identify any changing patterns of attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. A good, rich and well planned curriculum is provided and pupils benefit from good levels of personal support. The curriculum provided

has improved since the last inspection, although the quality of teaching is judged to be not quite as good.

Teaching and Learning

The quality of teaching and the assessment of pupils' learning are satisfactory overall. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' learning; however, the information gathered is not used consistently in the planning of future activities. The teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was often good. However, the work in pupils' books suggests that teaching over the year is satisfactory in most classes but is consistently strong in the reception and in Years 2 and 5.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reception children benefit from very effective teaching;
- Good teaching in the infant classes and in Year 5 enables pupils to learn successfully;
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school;
- Good teaching of the whole class is sometimes weakened by the group activities provided;
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of science and writing in some junior classes.

Commentary

12. Reception children benefit greatly from the wide range of stimulating activities provided. Their curiosity is fired, for example, by searching for tiny creatures in the wooded area near school and their interest is sustained by varying the imaginative approaches used. The skills of reading, writing and handling numbers are taught very effectively because children are guided to listen and observe carefully and encouraged to talk about what they hear and see. Children's learning is very accurately assessed and the information is used precisely to cater for their needs, including those with special educational needs and the more able ones. The strong emphasis on children finding out for themselves enables them to become purposeful and independent learners.
13. Teaching and learning are mainly good in the infant classes and in Year 5. In these classes, pupils are very well managed and the atmosphere for learning is always good. Pupils work busily with good concentration and take pride in the presentation of their work. Lessons are well organised, move along at a good pace and pupils have no time to drift. The inventive approaches used engage their interest. For example, in Year 1, the teacher made learning fun by hiding numbers on a 100 square and asking pupils to work out what the missing number could be. There are elements of very good teaching in Years 2 and 5, particularly in literacy. In Year 2, the teacher's high expectations and infectious enthusiasm subtly influences pupils' desire to learn. In Years 2 and 5, pupils' different learning needs are very well planned and catered for and the challenge for the more able ones inspires them to reach for higher levels.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively by teachers and very capable classroom assistants. Staff go to considerable lengths to nurture their self-esteem and help them to overcome their difficulties. For example, in a particularly successful mathematics lesson in Year 4, by adapting the tasks and providing very good support, pupils with special educational needs learnt how to multiply numbers.
15. There is some good teaching in every class. The teaching of ICT, physical education and art and design is good throughout the school. During the inspection, every teacher

produced at least two good lessons. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. When the whole class is taught together, teaching is often good. New ideas are explained well and pupils know what they are expected to learn. Demonstrations and instructions are clear and helpful and are brought to life in Years 4, 5 and 6 by good use of ICT to project images onto a large screen. Teachers use questioning well to make pupils think and to probe their understanding though, in some lessons, opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to exchange ideas and learn from one another. Later in the lessons, when pupils are given tasks to reinforce their learning, some inconsistencies arise that hamper their progress. Some teachers are more adept than others in providing activities that match pupils' different learning needs. This was done well during the inspection but the work in pupils' books shows that they are sometimes given the same task to complete, irrespective of their different learning needs. When this happens their learning slows because the more able pupils are not challenged enough and less able pupils find the work too difficult.

16. Teaching in science is weak partly because the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged but largely because teachers lack expertise in investigational science. In writing, insufficient attention is given to helping pupils to extend and improve their written work and present it neatly and carefully. The marking of pupils' work is not consistent. In Year 5, marking is particularly constructive and the teacher's high expectations are reflected in the presentation, accuracy and the amount of work completed. In contrast, pupils' work is sometimes simply ticked or crossed and no written feedback is provided. These inconsistencies have arisen partly because most of the junior teachers have only joined the school this year. Senior staff know that there is work to do to remove inconsistencies.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0)	7 (21)	14 (41)	13 (38)	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.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum. Pupils' learning and personal development are significantly enhanced through the very good range of out of school activities provided. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school offers a rich, diverse and stimulating variety of activities for all pupils;
- The quality of display throughout the school reflects the value placed on pupils' work;
- Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for;
- Opportunities to investigate are increasing but there is still more to do in science.

Commentary

17. The curriculum is enhanced through a very good range of extra-curricular activities in sports, the arts and other diverse areas, such as French and gardening. In the Book

Club, Year 2 pupils are paired with Year 6 partners for weekly practice. The quality of dance, in preparation for a public performance, reflects the school's high level of commitment to physical education and the Arts. Pupils' achievements are highly valued and displayed effectively around the school. Pupils' talents are nurtured well and this makes a valuable contribution to their good personal development. The rich curriculum and stimulating activities provided in the Foundation Stage enable young children to make a very good start.

18. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Very effective systems have been established to identify their individual needs and every effort is made to guide them towards achieving their personal goals. These pupils are happy and confident learners, despite, in some cases, having only recently joined the school. Effective support is also provided for gifted and talented pupils. In some instances, as in Year 1, individual tuition is provided to enable them to work at higher levels. Staff provide high levels of support and deal sympathetically and successfully with the diverse range of additional needs throughout the school. This is true of the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language, of the children in public care and of those from travelling backgrounds. Such commitment to welcoming and valuing pupils and including them in the life of the school, irrespective of their personal needs, is a strength of the school.
19. Since the last inspection, a wider range of activities and approaches to learning has been introduced. For example in mathematics, pupils are increasingly investigating numbers and learning to apply their skills in problem solving situations. Although more practical experiences have been introduced in science, teaching pupils to think logically and to work methodically has not been a strong point. Consequently, their understanding of how to interpret evidence is underdeveloped and standards in science have fallen because the school has not kept up with these changing requirements. However, the provision for ICT has improved significantly and pupils are now achieving well in acquiring skills and using them to research for information in other subjects. The religious education curriculum has also improved, although not to the same degree. Further improvements, such as visiting places of worship of different faiths, are planned.
20. Increasing numbers of pupils enter school midway through their primary education. Initial assessments made by class teachers enable those with special educational needs, English as an additional language or from travelling backgrounds to settle in successfully.
21. Accommodation is good and includes extensive outdoor grounds. The woodland and garden areas provide a very good environment for science investigations. Reception children enjoyed their hunt for 'minibeasts' although the creatures unfortunately refused to come out of hiding! Classrooms are spacious and there is a satisfactory range of resources overall. The school is fortunate in having caring teachers and a group of well trained support staff who make a vital contribution to pupils' learning and their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good. The provision of support, advice and guidance is satisfactory. The way that pupils' views are gathered and acted upon is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships in school create an atmosphere of trust;
- Pupils respond well to encouragement to play a key part in school life;
- Child protection, first aid and health and safety arrangements are good.

Commentary

22. Pupils develop trusting relationships with adults in school and know that their ideas and concerns will be handled sensitively. As a result, they gain in confidence and understand that making mistakes is a natural part of learning. In lessons, most pupils are keen to answer questions and join in discussions. They are eager to volunteer to carry out tasks and willing to take on responsibilities. Their self-esteem and self-reliance are strengthened by school trips and residential visits.
23. Pupils know their views matter and feel confident to express them both through their various roles on the school council, on the 'ECO' committee and through class discussions. A strong feature of a games lesson for pupils in Year 6 was the willingness of pupils to assess the performance of others and contribute ideas on how to improve it. The guidance and support provided for pupils is increasing. For example, progress ladders on the classroom walls now show pupils what they need to do to improve their writing. Good support is given to those pupils with special educational needs and parents agree that, as a result of this, their children make good progress. However, the marking of pupils' work is much more constructive in some classes than others.
24. Pupils' care and welfare have a high priority. Child protection procedures are good and staff are made aware of their responsibilities. There are sufficient adults to administer first aid and teachers are well aware of pupils' diverse medical needs. Teachers and support staff respond very sensitively to vulnerable children and succeed in making them feel safe and secure. Parents are confident that their children are well cared for. Health and safety and risk assessments are regularly conducted and any issues are discussed during meetings between governors and staff.
25. The induction arrangements for new entrants to the school are very good and there are good arrangements for pupils who enter school after reception. Year 6 pupils who joined the school in Years 3 and 4 confirmed that they were invited to an induction day and a friend or group of friends supported them well during their early days in school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Very good links with parents and the community make a significant impact on pupils' learning and personal development. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a very positive view of the school;
- The school provides parents with a good range of information;
- Through the rich community links, pupils' experiences are broadened considerably.

Commentary

26. The returned questionnaires show that parents find the headteacher and staff easy to approach. Parents have every confidence that their children are very well looked after

in school and any concerns they might have are promptly acted upon. A very good partnership has been established between home and school. The school welcomes the plentiful support that parents provide and in return, offers ICT courses, a pre-school unit and out of school childcare. Some parents, grandparents and governors help in classrooms, for example, with design and technology projects. The Parent Teacher Association plays an important role in the school and the community by arranging well supported social and fund raising events.

27. Parents are consulted through annual questionnaires and their views are taken seriously. In response to parents' requests for more regular information on their children's progress, the school introduced interim reports in the autumn and spring terms. Parents value the termly curriculum updates, which explain what their children will be learning about. Whilst the school prospectus and the annual report of the governing body are friendly and welcoming, they do not contain specific information about attendance. The annual report to parents on children's progress is very detailed in English, mathematics and science but less so in other subjects, which is unfortunate, since the school offers many interesting activities in these areas. A very helpful school website provides information on the school's ethos and activities.
28. The school has forged very good links with its community. There is extensive use of the school premises by community groups, including a youth club for pupils attending the school. The school benefits greatly from sharing the premises with the local education authority music and advisory centres by testing out new ideas and materials. Very close ties with the flourishing pre-school ensure that children are very well prepared for starting school. Strong links with a childcare organisation ensure that the care of children extends well beyond the school day. Pupils participate enthusiastically in musical and dance performances for the community. Visits and residential experiences make pupils well aware of their responsibilities of being good citizens.

29. The links with other schools and colleges are good and enhance pupils' learning. For example, there are good sporting links with the main receiving high school as well as Spanish lessons for Year 6 pupils. Pupils enter maths challenges with other schools. Good practice is shared between the cluster group of schools for the benefit of the children. Science was brought to life through a project with a visitor from Liverpool University. Students are regularly welcomed into school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management, including the contribution made by the headteacher, key staff and governors, are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teamwork and communications between staff and the governors are good;
- Governors provide clear and decisive guidance in resolving financial matters;
- Although strengthening, the process of self-evaluation leading to improvements has not been sufficiently rigorous in the past.

Commentary

30. The leadership and management of the headteacher are satisfactory. Governors, parents and staff appreciate the positive climate for learning that has been established. The headteacher has quietly, but effectively, developed the breadth and richness of activities that benefit pupils throughout the school. There is a strong emphasis on inclusion. The school has deservedly gained a good reputation for integrating pupils whom other schools have been unable to accommodate easily. The headteacher is continuing to devolve responsibilities, creating a management team and giving staff and governors greater 'ownership' of aspects of the school's work. However, until recently, checking the quality of the work of the school has not been rigorous enough in ironing out the inconsistencies.
31. The leadership and management provided by key staff are satisfactory. The senior team, established this school year, has introduced a new tier of management to the school. This is already proving beneficial. Having representatives of the Foundation Stage, the infant and the junior classes, it broadens the range of experience in the decision making process. It also offers wider opportunities to develop a more rigorous monitoring system across the school, something the school has lacked. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good and of the infant classes, it is good. Leadership is also good in physical education. However, in science, the leadership has not been sufficiently rigorous to improve pupils' investigational skills. All subject leaders have now been provided with opportunities to be released from their classroom responsibilities to study the quality of provision in their subjects. Although this initiative is very appropriate for the needs of the school, it is too early yet to judge its impact. However, recent moves to strengthen the influence of leadership are placing the school in a stronger position to move forward.
32. The governance of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. Governors bring their professionalism to bear and provide very effective financial management. They act as 'critical friends' by asking challenging questions, to which the headteacher responds. They are proud of their school's achievements and are

good ambassadors in its promotion. However, although governors are well aware of the weaknesses in science, they are less aware of other weaknesses, for example in pupils' written work. Governors are beginning to acquire a clearer understanding of the work by linking individual governors with subject leaders. This is also allowing them to evaluate the impact of their spending decisions.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	543,121	Balance from previous year	84,011
Total expenditure	465,753	Balance carried forward to the next	80,668
Expenditure per pupil	3,147		

33. The unspent sum of £80,668, at first glance, looks too high. However, governors have been very astute about planning for the future. They have anticipated the fall in pupil numbers and saved resources now to cushion the effects on the school over the next few years. The budget surplus is already £20,000 less and there will not be a surplus at all in three years time.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

34. The 13 children in the Foundation Stage all entered the reception class at the beginning of the school year. Children's attainment on entry to the school is typical for their age. As a result of very good planning and teaching, almost all children achieve the goals expected in all areas of learning and in many instances exceed them by the end of the reception year. Children's learning is very accurately assessed. The information gathered is used very effectively to plan the next steps for learning. Reception staff place a high value on children learning through exploration and play. Very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage harnesses the skills and talents of staff well and focuses them in a concerted effort to provide the best opportunities for children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships help children to grow in confidence;
- Children respond very well to encouragement to work independently.

Commentary

35. Very good teaching enables children to achieve very well in this area of learning. Children are encouraged to choose activities, organise themselves and take some responsibility for their own learning. As a result, they co-operate well with each other and share resources. For example, while looking for mini beasts, children recognised the need to be responsible for the environment and care for living things. Adults set a good example of how they expect children to conduct themselves and quickly recognise, praise and reward the children when they get it right. Consequently, children behave sensibly and show consideration towards each other and their surroundings. The high level of support provided for children with special educational needs ensures that they are also able to make very good progress.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Key skills of speaking, reading and writing are taught very well;
- The strong partnership with parents enhances children's learning.

Commentary

36. Teaching is very effective in all areas of literacy. Children achieve very well and most of them have already reached the learning goals expected. Consequently, the teacher has raised the levels of challenge by introducing elements of the Year 1 literacy curriculum. This is preparing children very well for their transfer into the infant classes in a few weeks time. Particularly effective use is made of ICT to teach reading and writing skills. Children can see what happens when different letters are put together and most of them are able to read and write simple words correctly, such as 'hat' and 'can'. They are also beginning to recognise and use full stops and capital letters in their writing, which is beyond the level expected for their age. By informing parents of their children's targets for reading and writing, a very effective home/school partnership is emerging which is boosting children's learning. An imaginatively designed role play area, in the form of a rescue boat, enhances children's speaking and listening skills significantly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations and stimulating methods are strong features of the teaching;
- Children's different levels of understanding are very well catered for.

Commentary

37. Teaching and learning in this area are very good. The class teacher and nursery assistant are equally effective in helping children to understand numbers to 100 and how to count in twos and tens. The methods and approaches used, such as number boards and ICT projections, appeal to children and stimulate them to think. Learning is often presented in the form of a game, which children greatly enjoy. The key to success in this area is the way different activities are provided to cater for children's particular stages of understanding. For example, more able pupils add numbers mentally and then record them, while pupils with special educational needs concentrate on improving their counting skills. Colourful displays, including a lighthouse with mathematical questions such as '3 more than 2 is', make an important contribution to children's learning. Children achieve very well. The majority have reached, and some exceeded, the goals expected.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to learn by exploring and finding out for themselves;
- Children's skills in ICT are developing particularly well.

Commentary

38. Very strong teaching helps children to achieve very well in this area of learning and their knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. The purposeful activities provided, in school and outside, stimulate children's curiosity and their desire to learn. For example, in searching for 'minibeasts' in the school's woodland area, children learn to respect living things and use tools safely. Their knowledge of computers is developing rapidly. They know how to alter the images on the large computer screen and use the mouse and keyboard skilfully, for example to sequence letters and numbers correctly. Practical activities are skilfully woven into other areas of learning. For example, in making cards and gifts, children gain insights into different faiths and celebrations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical skills develop very successfully in the hall and outside;
- Children's practical skills are very well catered for.

Commentary

39. Very good teaching ensures that children's achievement in this area is very successful. In physical activity sessions in the school hall, children respond very positively to the increasing level of challenge. As a result, they use bats and balls with good control and co-ordination for their age. The teacher's high expectations are reflected in the way children follow instructions and become very aware of safety and the space around them. The outdoor area and large play equipment are used well to develop their climbing and balancing skills. Provision of sand and water enable children to experiment with handling different objects and materials. In addition, craft activities provide opportunities for them to practise using tools including scissors, pencils, brushes and moulding equipment. Children demonstrate very good physical skills and many exceed the levels expected.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many stimulating and worthwhile activities are provided to promote creativity.

Commentary

40. Children's creativity is nurtured very successfully and they achieve very well in this area. Imaginative settings for role play and numerous activities designed to encourage children to express their ideas and feelings, contribute significantly to their creative development. The classroom contains many impressive examples of children's creative work, including models, paintings, cards and presents made to celebrate special occasions. In addition to developing their understanding of colour and pattern through decorating eggs and exploring ICT graphics programs, children have gained skills in making models of moving cars using construction kits.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is high quality teaching and learning in Years 2 and 5;

- Pupils develop their reading skills well throughout the school;
- The good start made in writing is not maintained sufficiently in some of the junior classes.

Commentary

41. The 2004 results in Year 2 were well above average, both in reading and writing. Infant pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are rising and are equally high this year. Compared with the last inspection, standards are equally high in Year 2 but are lower in Year 6. The 2004 results in Year 6 were below average in English. Standards in English in Year 6 are closer to the levels expected this year. However, standards would be at least a grade higher if it were not for the high number of pupils moving in from other schools. Taking into account the high pupil mobility, pupils' achievement is satisfactory from Years 3 to 6. Writing is the area most in need of improvement.
42. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and support staff plan activities carefully to match their specific learning needs. Teaching is very good in Years 2 and 5. In these classes, teachers' high expectations inspire pupils to achieve well. Leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The subject leader sets the example with high quality teaching. However, this has a much stronger influence in the infant classes than in the junior classes because good practice is not shared sufficiently and some weaknesses are not remedied. For example, there are inconsistencies in the marking of books, which leads to weaknesses in handwriting and presentation.
43. Achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory. Most pupils listen well to instructions and join in class discussions. However, these sometimes go on too long. Then, pupils' interest begins to flag and not enough time is left for them to practise and improve their writing skills. In Year 2, pupils discuss ideas in pairs before writing, which clarifies their thinking and improves their vocabulary. This type of preparation is not used enough in some classes. Formal debates, such as on 'Hare Coursing' in Year 4, improve pupils' confidence in speaking and stimulate their verbal 'jousting'.
44. Achievement in reading is very good in the infant classes and good in the junior classes. Word building skills are very well taught in Years 1 and 2. Consequently, pupils read fluently and enjoy reading. Whether they are reading in a group to an adult or in an unsupervised group, the same enthusiasm shines through. Books are chosen well to link reading with pupils' own experiences, such as the class visit to a farm. Research skills, introduced in the infant classes, are well developed through the junior classes. The close links with home ensure that pupils benefit from regular practice that improves their reading further. Classroom assistants play a key role in boosting pupils' confidence and skills, both in lessons and in withdrawal groups.
45. Achievement in writing is very good in Years 2 and 5, where work is often linked to other lessons or to the pupils' own experiences. This stimulates creativity and pupils take a pride in their work. It is carefully marked and targets are set to show them what they need to do to improve. Achievement in other classes is satisfactory but there are some weaknesses. Pupils spend more time than necessary completing exercises and the skills practised are not always carried forward into their stories and accounts. Pupils rarely improve their written work by reading it through, talking about it and changing words and phrases to improve the accuracy or make it more appealing to the reader. This holds back their achievement in the creative aspects of writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Speaking and listening skills are developed well in the many class discussions in different subjects. 'Brainstorming' for ideas concentrates pupils' minds very effectively and increases their capacity to speak to the whole class. However, the more reticent speakers often take a back seat. They do not have enough opportunities to gain confidence and improve their spoken language by talking to a partner. Drama is used well in some subjects to develop expressive speaking. Reading in books or on screens is used extensively for research in many subjects. Such non-fiction texts often place greater demands on the readers and so extend their skills even further. Pupils' writing skills are extended in other subjects up to a point. In some classes, worksheets are used too often. Pupils fill in missing words or write short sentences but this does not encourage them to write extensively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Rising standards by the end of Year 2 are offset by falling standards by Year 6;
- Teaching is most effective in Years 2 and 5 and there are good elements elsewhere;
- Some inconsistencies in teaching and learning are holding pupils' achievement back.

Commentary

47. Pupils enter Year 1 with good knowledge of numbers and shapes. Infant pupils achieve well overall and the standards reached by the end of Year 2 are well above average and much higher than in similar schools. The current Year 2 pupils are also achieving high standards because of good teaching. At first glance, results in Year 6 look to have fallen significantly from high levels at the time of the last inspection to below average levels in 2004. However, in 2004, almost half of the pupils tested in Year 6 had joined the school during their junior years and 25 per cent of them had special educational needs. The same happened in 2003 and a similar picture is emerging in the current Year 6. If the results obtained by the pupils who remained in the school are calculated separately, standards would be above rather than below average. Taking all these factors into account, pupils' achievement in mathematics in the junior classes is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good levels of support. Classroom assistants also work effectively with the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils who have to overcome barriers to learning gain confidence and make good progress towards their targets.
48. Teaching is satisfactory overall and is consistently good in Years 2 and 5. In these classes, teachers' planning takes good account of how pupils have responded to the previous day's work. Tasks are then set accordingly, which cater well for their different learning needs. More able pupils relish the more challenging work. In these classes, pupils of all abilities achieve well. There are good aspects of teaching in all classes. In particular, the teaching of the whole class together is largely successful. There is a good focus on mental calculation, which encourages pupils to think quickly and accurately. New ideas are clearly explained and pupils know what they are expected to learn. In the best lessons, pupils are asked to explain how they have worked out the answer. They learn that there are several ways to solve a problem and their understanding of relationships, between multiplication and division for example

strengthens considerably. However, developing pupils' mathematical strategies is more successful in some classes than others.

49. Inconsistencies in the type of activities provided to help pupils to practise, improve and extend their learning restrict their progress. In Years 1 and 3, although pupils work productively and carefully, their different learning needs are not sufficiently catered for as they work through workbook and textbooks pages at roughly the same rate. In these classes, the quicker mathematicians could achieve more if they were encouraged to work at higher levels. By contrast, in Year 2, the more able pupils achieve well because they are given demanding tasks, involving larger numbers. In Years 4 and 6, there is less dependence on commercial schemes and more of the work is based on investigating numbers and shapes. However, in these classes, pupils do not always work with maximum concentration and perseverance and this is reflected in carelessness and untidy presentation. There are also inconsistencies in the marking of work and pupils are not always shown what they need to do to improve. Teachers are just beginning to provide clear targets for pupils to aim for to help them to reach a higher level. This is being developed purposefully in Year 4 using a traffic light system, which is helping pupils to assess their own progress. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has identified the weaknesses by examining pupils' work and teachers' planning. However, improvements are limited because the subject leader does not work alongside teachers in lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to improve their mathematical skills by applying them in other subjects. For example, good links with ICT enable pupils to calculate formulae on spreadsheets, gather and classify data, and practise mathematical skills using games. In science, pupils have worthwhile opportunities to sort results and, in design and technology, accurate measuring and cutting enhance their work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Junior pupils are underachieving, particularly the more able ones;
- Teaching how to plan and carry out scientific investigations is weak;
- Infant pupils benefit from the good range of practical experiences provided.

Commentary

51. In the most recent tests of 2004, the Year 6 results were well below average and well below those in similar schools. Even when account is taken of pupils transferring from other schools and the incidence of special educational needs, standards in Year 6 are too low. There are weaknesses in subject leadership and management. The subject leader and governors are well aware of the low standards in science. It is now a priority for improvement and some attempts are being made to raise standards. Junior pupils are beginning to benefit from more practical activities. However, the exact nature of the weakness of provision in science is not fully appreciated. It is because pupils are not taught sufficiently to make a prediction and then design a fair test to find out whether their predictions are correct. Pupils are not methodical in their work and

have very limited understanding of how variables must be controlled to ensure that the test is scientific. Lack of such teaching in the past has left pupils struggling to carry out an investigation and to interpret graphical data. Consequently, they lack the necessary skills to tackle the national tests, which are now more geared to this type of reasoning. A further weakness is the lack of challenge for the more able pupils. This arises because teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment to find out what pupils already understand before moving on. In the two lessons seen, the more able pupils were given the same tasks as everyone else. Consequently, opportunities to extend their learning were missed.

52. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall in the junior classes. In the lessons observed, teaching was adequate and better than it appears to have been from an examination of the work in pupils' science books. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were asked to give reasons to back up their suggestions. If pupils gave an unexplained answer, the teacher constantly challenged them to, 'Prove it'. This increased their concentration and encouraged them to reason scientifically. However, in the same lesson, some pupils were not drawn into the discussion and lost interest. By contrast, in a Year 5 lesson, the very good support that was provided for pupils with complex learning needs enabled them to succeed. For the most part, teachers and classroom assistants cater well for pupils with special educational needs by adapting the tasks or providing additional support. As a result, these pupils make good progress, often better than their classmates.

53. Infant pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teachers' assessment suggests that standards are high, but during the inspection pupils' knowledge and understanding was found to be at the levels expected. Infant pupils benefit from good opportunities to handle equipment and learn through observation. For example, Year 1 pupils planted seeds and recorded their growth and Year 2 pupils made electric circuits with batteries, wires and bulbs. They are asked to predict what is likely to happen and record the outcomes, according to their writing skills. Such experiences provide a secure foundation for learning at a later stage. Good teaching in Year 2 is evident in the varied activities, which are well matched to pupils' different learning needs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good** and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership is having a marked effect on teaching and learning;
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and this enhances achievement;
- New facilities are used to good effect in raising standards.

Commentary

54. Standards reached by the end of Years 2 and 6 are at the levels expected. Pupils are now achieving well because they have access to good facilities and up-to-date technology. Infant pupils achieve well because of the very good start they have made in the reception class. Infant teachers are able to build well on these skills. For example, Year 2 children use the keyboard confidently and use the correct technical vocabulary. They also have a good grasp of how computers are used in the outside world. 'My dad has a computer road map in his car,' explained one boy.
55. Year 6 pupils showed their knowledge of sending/receiving emails in the lesson observed. They were also knowledgeable about the risks and rules in using the Internet and opening emails from unknown sources. Pupils have numerous files saved on computers, which show the range and quality of work undertaken. They talk confidently about the skills they possess, such as word processing, using Excel to input and sort numerical data and producing Power Point presentations for their studies in history. Pupils are also familiar with Logo and with using instructions to control model traffic lights. Although few ICT lessons were seen, the success in pupils' learning suggests that teaching is effective overall. In Years 4 and 6, teachers use the interactive white boards to good effect, to explain and illustrate new ideas, such as conditions at the time of World War II. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and a selection of suitable programs enables them to practise and improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
56. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader's knowledge and enthusiasm has been the key factor in raising standards. Teachers have benefited from the additional training and support provided. Assessment procedures to measure the extent of pupils' learning have been established and self-assessment is being introduced to enable pupils to check their own progress. Computer clubs out of school

for both pupils and parents have helped to generate a wider interest in ICT and give pupils valuable opportunities to extend their learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. Pupils' skills in ICT are extended well in other subjects. Graphics packages are used particularly well in art and design to explore colour and pattern, for example in designing Joseph's coat of many colours. Word processing is used effectively in literacy to find colourful ways of presenting poems, stories and accounts. Similarly in mathematics, pupils are well acquainted with spreadsheets and handling data. The Internet and CD-ROM are used extensively in subjects such as history and geography to research information.

HUMANITIES

58. No **geography** or **history** lessons were observed, therefore the school's provision cannot be evaluated in these subjects. However, discussions with pupils and an examination of their work indicate that in these subjects, pupils' work is typical for their age as it was at the time of the last inspection.

59. In geography, the good use made of the local area by infant teachers gives pupils a secure start in understanding geographical ideas, such as planning routes and identifying features. For example, Year 1 pupils have produced a big book containing digital photographs and text describing the area around school. Pupils are learning to be aware of how they can make a difference to the environment and the 'nice and nasty' display illustrates their findings. Junior pupils extend their knowledge of the local area by undertaking more detailed map work and conducting surveys. They also study a range of topics including Weather, Traffic, Rivers and the Water Cycle. Their concern for the environment has resulted in an interesting 'ECO' project. There is evidence around the school, including the recycling depot, of their contributions to this scheme. Geography offers pupils good opportunities to improve their reading skills and knowledge through research and effective use of ICT. However, the work does not always challenge the more able pupils sufficiently and the extensive use of worksheets does not encourage pupils to plan their own written accounts.

60. In history, pupils have good opportunities to study a wide range of topics including Victorians, Ancient Egypt, Invaders and Settlers and World War II. In Year 1, by including artefacts in their role play, pupils are able to imagine and talk about what life was like in Victorian times. As a result of their work on topics such as Transport and Kitchens and Bathrooms, Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of change over time. Junior pupils make good use of ICT to research their topics in history. For example, Year 6 pupils have produced PowerPoint presentations on the theme of evacuation during World War II, successfully combining their historical knowledge and ICT skills. In Year 3, there is an informative display of books and pupils' work on the theme of Invaders and Settlers. Pupils thoroughly enjoy researching information for themselves and this approach fosters their interest in learning and sharpens their reading and ICT skills. However, the presentation of their work is often careless and untidy.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in the infant classes respond very well to the varied and interesting challenges;
- Pupils do not have enough first-hand experiences to develop a full understanding of the faiths they are studying.

Commentary

61. Infant pupils achieve well and standards are above those expected in local schools. Achievement is satisfactory in the junior classes and standards match the levels expected for schools in Sefton. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in the infant classes and satisfactorily in the junior classes. Standards have improved in the junior classes since the last inspection, when they were found to be unsatisfactory.
62. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in the infant classes. Good comparisons are made between the pupils' own experiences and how other people think, feel and act. For example, when studying festivals and celebrations they learn about Christian, Jewish and Hindu beliefs and traditions. Much varied work is completed and tasks are well matched to pupils' different learning needs. The work also helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging, to the class and to the school.
63. Good foundations laid in the infant classes are not sufficiently built upon in the junior classes. The older pupils learn about world religions, but close links are not made with their own experiences. Consequently, they do not see the same relevance to their work. There is an overuse of worksheets, rather than encouraging pupils to express their own ideas in print. However, some good links are made with other subjects. In Year 3, pupils use their skills to plan and write stories on Hindu gods. In Year 4, good links are made with ICT as pupils research different faiths. The level of challenge is not as high as it could be in Years 5 and 6, though pupils gain adequate knowledge of the faiths they study.
64. The subject leader has only recently been appointed and has made a satisfactory start. The school recognises that provision in the subject has its limitations. Older pupils have had few opportunities to learn about faiths, either from visits or from visiting speakers. When they benefit from such experiences, their interest in the subject is significantly raised. Pupils in Year 5 responded extremely positively to a group of young Christian believers who interpreted Bible teaching in a modern setting, familiar to their audience. Pupils in Year 6 also benefited greatly by learning about Islam from the personal experiences of one of their classmates who is himself a Muslim. Plans have now been made for pupils to visit places of worship and to invite speakers into school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. Two art and design and two physical education lessons were observed and judgements have been made on provision in these subjects. However, only one **design and technology** and one **music** lesson was observed. This is not enough to make a judgement on provision in these subjects. However, pupils discussed their work and their books were examined.
66. The good displays of design and technology projects indicate that the subject is taken seriously and contributes well to the rich curriculum provided. Year 2 pupils' models of

vehicles and the impressive working lighthouses made in Year 4, illustrate clearly that pupils have a good understanding of all aspects of the design and make process. Year 1 pupils have explored the 'Twist, Scrunch, Tear' properties of materials and developed important insights into how materials are chosen for different purposes. There are many useful links with ICT, such as pupils taking digital photos of their work. In the good lesson observed, Year 1 pupils enthusiastically made hinges, as a result of the good planning by the class teacher. By the end of the lesson the pupils were proud of their results and could confidently discuss how hinges work.

67. In music, the school's previous good reputation for providing instrumental tuition continues. Many pupils learn to play guitar, recorder, clarinet, flute and violin. The school also has a flourishing choir and pupils have good opportunities to participate in a good range of concerts and musical plays for different audiences. Pupils talk enthusiastically about music lessons, particularly activities in which they compose their own pieces. This aspect of music has been boosted by the use of ICT, which enables pupils to record, edit and rearrange their compositions. This has helped pupils to develop an appreciation of how symbols are used in musical scores. Pupils have a clear understanding of the characteristics of good singing. For example, they know to adopt the correct singing posture and breathe from the diaphragm. However, no whole school singing was heard during the inspection because opportunities to practise and improve singing in school assemblies are not always taken. In lessons, pupils have good opportunities to listen critically to different pieces of music and they are able to detect moods and identify different instruments. Pupils thoroughly enjoy playing percussion instruments. Infant pupils have a good sense of timing and are able to clap and tap the different beats and rhythms correctly. One effective teaching strategy is the use of cards marked F or S which pupils hold up when they detect changes in the tempo of the music played. This helps the teacher to assess how well they are learning.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Art and design is celebrated throughout the school in very attractive and informative displays;
- Work undertaken in other subjects is frequently developed further through artwork.

Commentary

68. Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well in art throughout the school. They enjoy the subject and work to levels higher than expected in infant and junior classes. Displays around the school testify to the variety as well as the high quality of work often produced in lessons and in the Art Club. Pupils work in a wide range of media and scales. For example, in Year 2, small images of owls, fish and crabs were very creatively and sensitively produced, simply using a few leaves. Pupils are often encouraged to write about their work. A Year 1 pupil printed, 'I am pleased with my weaving. I like the bright colours in it.' Specialist art teachers from the local High School also visit annually and help pupils to produce exciting displays in different classes.

69. Art and design enhances the work in a range of subjects. A large collage, based on 'Mary, Mary, quite Contrary', was used well to extend pupils' language and counting skills. Cross-cultural themes are often explored. Work on clay dragons was stimulated by a Japanese story read in Year 3. On the annual Art Day, classes and parents work together on themes of their choice. This year, they ranged from the art of Ancient Egypt, to ships from around the world. Opportunities for pupils to create designs on computers are very well exploited. Intricate block patterns were developed in the infant classes. Designs were overlaid to create pupils' 'Dream Images' in the junior classes. ICT is also well used to promote the subject. The school's website contains a Picture Board on which work from all the classes is displayed. This celebrates the pupils' achievements well. Teaching is strongest in Year 4. Here, the pupils' sketchbooks are extensively used to develop pencil skills as well as to create sketches for later development. The high quality of their clay face hangings is testimony to the heightened sensitivity gained through such preparatory work. Through art, pupils are helped to gain a greater awareness into their own skill development and, significantly, into the world around them.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical education, including the many sporting activities, has a high profile;
- Teachers have good expertise and lessons are stimulating and purposeful.

Commentary

70. The school's success in physical education has continued since the last inspection. Much of this is attributable to effective and enthusiastic leadership. The school has gained the 'Active Mark Gold' award in recognition of its work. Pupils are very enthusiastic about physical activity and are very knowledgeable about the benefits of exercise, diet and healthy lifestyles. They are quick to take advantage of the very good range of additional sporting activities, such as football, hockey and tennis. They cater well for both boys and girls and nurture their talents effectively. The physical skills and appreciation of teamwork that pupils gain during out of school activities are reflected in the good achievement in lessons. Year 6 pupils have good spatial awareness and they know how practice improves their performance, for example in athletic activities such as hurdling.
71. The characteristics of good teaching were present in both of the lessons observed. Brisk warm-ups raised pupils' heart rates. Pupils worked safely and used the available space well. They worked hard and increased their stamina. In both lessons, the coaching of new skills was good and pupils were encouraged to reflect on how well they were performing and consider how improvements could be made. Consequently, Year 1 pupils have good ball control for their age and Year 6 pupils are adept in assessing their own performance and that of others. Good standards are achieved in games lessons and in swimming. Virtually all pupils achieve the 25 metre standard and over half of them gain advanced distance and proficiency awards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

72. The school has in place a planned programme to support teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE). Pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles such as keeping fit and following a balanced diet. They also develop a good awareness of personal safety and their responsibilities towards looking out for others. In science and geography, there is a strong focus on caring for the environment and conserving resources. Through a variety of subjects and specific lessons, pupils learn successfully about their rights and the need to respect the rights of others. They gain important insights into the features of communities, such as democracy, rules and the law. The caring ethos of the school is evident through its contribution to aid projects, including clothing for children in Mozambique and pencils for children in Russia. In addition the school's council and 'ECO' Committee provide pupils with an opportunity to take responsibility; a valuable preparation for all young citizens.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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