

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GEORGE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wallasey

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 104995

Headteacher: Mr S R Smurthwaite

Lead inspector: Mr Clive Davies

Dates of inspection: 23-25th May 2005

Inspection number: 267781

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	806
School address:	St George's Road Wallasey Wirral Merseyside
Postcode:	CH45 3NF
Telephone number:	0151 638 6014
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Holmes
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St George's is one of the biggest primary schools in the country and situated on a split site with Year 5 and 6 pupils being taught in a building that is approximately a third of a mile away from the other site. It receives children into the nursery at the age of 3 and the vast majority do not leave until the end of Year 6, aged 11. It serves a mixed community which is confirmed by the average number of pupils that are entitled to school meals free of charge. Almost all pupils who attend are from British white families. When they first start school children display a wide range of personal and academic skills, with many being confident communicators while others lack maturity. Overall, their skills levels on entry match those expected for their age. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is slightly below the national average as is the number with statements for special needs. Very few pupils who attend do not speak English as their main language at home.

The school runs a small business for its extended services, which includes a breakfast and after school club and offers wrap around care. It gained a Healthy Schools Award in 2002, an Active-mark in 2004, a Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2005 and was awarded its Investors in People in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3639	Clive Davies	Lead inspector	Literacy
9649	Jean Smith	Lay inspector	
11371	Frank Ravey	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
4237	Stephen Toon	Team inspector	Mathematics
19226	Stephen Flood	Team inspector	Science, special educational needs
27677	Doreen Davenport	Team inspector	Foundation Stage of Learning
32259	Geoff Seagrove	Team inspector	Art and Design, Design and Technology, music and physical education
30781	Wendy Richardson	Team inspector	Geography, history and religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

St George's is a good school with many very good features. The pastoral care and personal development of pupils are major strengths. Standards are above average in English and mathematics. Good leadership ensures that teachers are focused on raising standards resulting in most pupils achieving well. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school successfully helps pupils to: feel confident; be highly motivated; and, behave very well.
- All classrooms are well organised and stimulating.
- The leadership of, and provision for, pupils with special education needs is very good.
- Additional activities provided for pupils outside the main curriculum greatly enrich the quality of their education.
- Effective leadership by the headteacher and the four assistant headteachers ensures that all staff know what is expected of them.
- Pupils have good and trusting relationships with all the staff, are encouraged to be healthy and make a very telling contribution to the community.
- Parents work very effectively with the school to help their children have positive attitudes to learning.
- There is inconsistency in the challenge provided for more able pupils.
- Assessment information is not always used as effectively as it could to help pupils achieve their full potential.

The school was last inspected in November 1998 and it has made good progress since that time. It has maintained its areas of strength and has made particularly good progress in respect of its provision for pupils in the foundation stage of learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The vast majority of pupils achieve well with pupils with special educational needs achieving very well. Recent National Curriculum test results for Year 2 pupils show that they attain very well in reading, writing and mathematics. The Year 6 test results show that pupils have maintained standards at an above average level for English and mathematics. Standards in science are improving and the early indications of the 2005 national test results shows that pupils are now attaining standards that are in line with national expectations.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	C	B	A
mathematics	B	B	C	C
science	C	C	D	D

*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.*

When children first start school they display a full range of personal and academic skills but overall they are in line with those expected for their age. During their time in the foundation stage, Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress as is noted by the very good test results at the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6 progress is more variable, being satisfactory overall. There are particular strengths in the progress made in Year 5, where pupils of all abilities are challenged effectively. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school resulting in very few of those pupils not attaining at the levels expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6 respectively. The level of challenge provided for more able pupils is more varied and inconsistent. This results in fewer pupils than should attaining the higher levels (level 5) at the end of Year 6. Pupils attain good

standards in sport and the creative arts, with standards being enhanced by the good provision available for talented pupils in these areas. In all other areas standards are satisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils are a delight to be with. They are exceptionally confident when communicating with adults and are very keen to do well. Through the school council they have made an important contribution to the way lunchtimes and breaktimes are organised. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. Attendance rates are above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The curriculum is enriched by the many opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of additional activities after school and to take part in residential and other visits. The curriculum is being re-modelled to allow more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all areas. **The quality of teaching and learning is good**, being at its best in the foundation stage of learning, Years 1, 2 and 5. Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by their very good attitudes and behaviour. This ensures that very little time is lost to unnecessary disruption. Good classroom organisation is also helping in this respect. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but not enough use is made of information from assessments to help pupils to improve their learning or to know what to do next to improve their work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. Governors know the school well and are very effective in challenging the school's leadership. They fully meet their statutory requirements. The headteacher has created effective leadership teams that ensure that everyone in this very large school is supported and encouraged. Very effective day-to-day administration is adding much to the school's good sense of order and care. The school's effective self-evaluation procedures have accurately identified its strengths and weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The pre-inspection parental questionnaires showed overwhelming support for what the school does for their children. Parents are encouraged to play a vital role in their children's education. The school has established very good links with the wider community. The School has an outstanding system of support for adults from the community who wish to train to work with children. The provision of high quality all day child-care provides a valuable service to the community. The pupils enjoy coming to school and express pride in, amongst other things, their involvement in creating a significant difference to the way playtimes are organised.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that there is a consistent level of challenge provided for more able pupils.
- Make better use of assessment information to help improve pupils' achievement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The vast majority of pupils achieve well with pupils with special educational needs achieving very well

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National Curriculum test results for Year 2 pupils have been consistently well above average for some years
- Standards in English and mathematics are above average
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well
- There is an inconsistent level of challenge for more able pupils
- Children in the foundation stage of learning make good progress in each of the six areas of learning
- Year 5 pupils achieve well
- Standards are good in sporting activities and the creative arts

Commentary

- 1 The table below shows that at the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards that exceed the national averages by some distance. This is the case for reading, writing and mathematics. The school's test results for writing are particularly impressive and were in the top 5 per cent nationally in 2004 as were the results for reading in 2002. Over the past four years the national test results have been at least well above average with the number attaining the higher level (Level 3) being almost twice the national average in each subject. Very few pupils fail to attain a Level 2. This is as a result of the school's good intervention programmes, which identifies pupils with learning difficulties at an early stage and provides very good academic support for them. The performance of boys and girls is equally as good in mathematics and although girls perform better than boys in reading and writing the difference is far less than that noted nationally. The present Year 2 pupils' work shows that they are continuing to work at a level that is above that expected for their age.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.8 (17.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.2 (16.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 99 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year (2003)

- 2 As seen from the following table, the results are not as glowing for Year 6 pupils. However, they have at least maintained standards at an above average level for English and most of the time for mathematics. The current Year 6 pupils are attaining at a level that is above that expected for their age in both English and mathematics but at the expected level for science. In terms of progress between Year 2 and Year 6 this represents satisfactory progress with pupils achieving appropriately. The main difference between the very good results for Year 2 and the Year 6 results is that not as many pupils are attaining at an above average standard (Level 5) in Year 6. The percentage of pupils who attain at least at the expected level for their age is good, which again underlines the good intervention work that is taking place. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well in Years 3 to 6 and therefore many more pupils than would otherwise be expected achieve the

intended level for their age in English and mathematics. Standards in science are improving and the early indications of the 2005 national test results shows that pupils are now attaining standards that are in line with national expectations

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.0 (26.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.9 (27.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.8 (28.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 124 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year (2003)

- 3 Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school resulting in very few of those pupils not attaining at the levels expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6 respectively. There is very careful analysis of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties undertaken very early on in the school. This information is fed into individual teacher's records and the very effective work undertaken by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) enables the teacher to plan and prepare appropriately for these pupils. Effective tracking systems have been created so that the attainment levels and expected progress of all of these pupils are clearly identified. Careful evaluation takes place to check that these pupils are then making the expected progress. A system of in-class support and withdrawal for specific work enables the school to fulfil its objective of providing very effectively for pupils with learning difficulties and ensure that they make very good progress.
- 4 There is an inconsistent level of challenge provided for the most able of pupils. This results in fewer pupils than would otherwise be expected attaining at the higher levels (level 5) in Year 6 national tests. The level of challenge provided for more able pupils in Years 1, 2 and 5 is often very good. However, in other classes the more able pupils are not being stretched. In mathematics, for example, teachers do not target more able pupils consistently with open questions which require more complex thinking or multiple answers. Similarly in literacy there are examples of the pace of lessons being too slow to engage the most able pupils at the level expected. Consequently, too many more able pupils could cope with more demanding work than they are given. One of the main problems relates to the lack of use of assessment information to plan appropriately. This weakness results in teachers not always pitching the work at the level that it should be for the most able.
- 5 Children in the foundation stage of learning make good progress and achieve well. Most of these young children start school with personal and academic skill levels that match those expected for their age. During their reception year they make good progress and achieve well. This results in the majority of children reaching the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of their reception year. Most children are likely to exceed them in personal social and emotional development because they make very good progress in this area. Children in the foundation stage with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support they receive. Similarly, there is good challenge provided for the most able enabling them to be very confident communicators.
- 6 The progress made by pupils in Year 5 is very good with all achieving to their full potential. This is mainly because teachers in this group more so than any other work very effectively together and make maximum use of assessment information so that they are able to challenge all pupils including the most able. In an ICT lesson, for example, pupils were able to write a simple procedure to control a device and link their ideas together. This was because of the way they were supported in the first instance and then provided with an appropriate challenge, which saw them applying their new found skills in a practical way. In a science lesson the teacher had presented tasks in such a way that the pupils couldn't wait to get on with investigations which required them to think deeply about what they had learnt. In

each of the Year 5 classes the level of challenge for more able pupils is just right and therefore these pupils, alongside others in their class, feel as though they have worked hard and know how much progress they have made in each lesson.

- 7 The school has a strong reputation for its sporting activities and its work in the performing arts. Standards in these areas are above national expectations with a high priority given to developing pupils' skills within lessons and outside school. Pupils with talents in these areas are encouraged with regular events like the achievement assemblies focusing on pupils' successes in and out of school. Many pupils who attend gymnastics clubs or football (both boys and girls) are able to display their skills in various school events. Dance is given a high priority with pupils' enthusiasm being matched by the dedication of staff who give much additional time to ensure pupils' performances are of a high standard.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities are very good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good
- Pupils show positive attitudes to their work and other activities; their personal development is good
- Pupils have very good relationships with each other and demonstrate very well that they are able to be part of a community
- Pupils are at ease with each adults and communicate very maturely
- Pupils have good knowledge of the way other people in different parts of the world live and worship
- Attendance is better than the national average

Commentary

- 8 The development of pupils' attitudes and values is a strength of the school. It contributes significantly towards helping pupils learn successfully. Their behaviour in lessons, the playground and around the building is very good. Pupils' personal development, including their social, moral spiritual and cultural development is good. The school expects pupils to behave well and has good procedures in place to encourage and support them in doing so. As a result, behaviour throughout the school is very good and pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations. Most pupils say they feel happy and secure in the playground and when interviewed, the school council highlighted this as an important focus for their work. A system has been established which encourages pupils to share their worries and concerns which contributes most positively to pupils' personal development.
- 9 Very good relationships are a feature of the school which underpins all pupils' academic and pastoral achievements. Pupils behave well in lessons by listening to their teachers and each other and taking turns when speaking and using equipment. They move around the school quietly and calmly and are polite to each other and adults. The school environment is well looked after by staff and pupils with no litter, graffiti or vandalism evident. The school has had one exclusion in the last year but exclusions generally are rare.
- 10 Pupils are at ease when speaking to adults and this is a strong feature of the school. Members of the school council, for example, are able to explain how they make decisions and do so very eloquently. A large number of pupils, especially in Year 5 and 6 display very mature attitudes and are able to talk about work, their own lives and how they may differ from other children in different parts of the world. They use mature phraseology, such as, 'the point I needed to make was...', or, 'I can only think that if they had taken another course

of action...’ It is clear that these pupils are used to talking to adults very regularly and draw their confidence from this.

- 11 Attendance rates are good. Pupils are happy to come to school and are eager to learn. There are very few unauthorised absences (0 per cent in the last academic year). Parents are conscientious in contacting the school when their children are absent and bring their children to school punctually in the mornings. The school has very effective procedures which monitor attendance rigorously and has appropriate systems to follow up absences and lateness.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.1%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The curriculum is enriched by the many opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of additional activities after school and to take part in residential and other visits.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good, being at its best in the foundation stage of learning, Years 1, 2 and 5.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is at its best in the foundation stage of learning and Years 1, 2 and 5
- Pupils’ very positive attitudes is helping them to learn effectively
- Classroom organisation and management are very good
- There is effective use of Interactive Whiteboards to support pupils’ learning
- Pupils with special education needs are well supported and make very good progress as a result
- There is some inconsistency regarding the way pupils are helped to understand what they need to do next in order to improve

Commentary

- 12 A large number of lessons were observed during the inspection with a vast majority being good (see table below). No unsatisfactory lessons were observed but 8 per cent were very good. The teaching was at its most consistent best in Year 5. In the foundation stage of learning, Years 1, 2 and 5 the teaching is consistently good or better, often being very good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	5 (8%)	37 (60%)	20 (32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

- 13 Within the foundation stage of learning staff are very effective in supporting children's personal development resulting in children making very good progress in this area of their learning. There is every encouragement given to more able children to communicate with adults and to everyone in the class. This results in more able children of nursery and reception age being appropriately challenged and encouraged to be curious. Good links with parents and pre-school settings help staff to recognise these children's needs immediately after they start. All adults work very effectively as a team and they have a good understanding of how children of this age learn. Planning is effective and classrooms are organised so as to support practical methods of learning. Activities are carefully balanced between those that children choose for themselves and those that are directed by adults. Good assessment procedures in the foundation stage of learning ensure that children's progress is carefully tracked and recorded and the information gathered is used well to plan the next stages of learning.
- 14 In Years 1 and 2 the staff successfully build on the solid platform that children are given in the foundation stage of learning. The organisation within Year 1 has to take account of the restriction of the accommodation. The use of the additional teacher to work with groups does give good opportunities for attention to be given to pupils of different abilities. The potential hindrance of working with small groups in the library is outweighed by the advantage of working with specific groups in a focused way. In Year 5 the teaching is almost always very good. This is because there is a very effective team of four teachers working exceptionally well together. The success of joint planning is aided by the very good subject knowledge of the individual teachers, enabling pupils to make particularly good progress in areas such as information and communication technology and science. A key feature of the teaching in Year 5 is the way the teachers promote enthusiasm amongst the pupils. This results in pupils being prepared to take risks as is seen in some of their independent research work. Good use of technology is another strong point enabling pupils to benefit from up-to-date teaching methods that challenge and support their learning.
- 15 Throughout the school pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour adds much to their ability to learn. In all lessons pupils' behaviour was very good. There is little or no time lost to unnecessary disruption and pupils know what is expected of them in terms of their personal conduct. Their positive attitudes enable them to support each other, ask relevant questions and to work well in independent or collaborative situations. Pupils thrive on praise and work very hard to be in a position where they receive it. As a result of their positive disposition they are confident communicators who are at ease talking with adults. The school council is but one example of a group who come across in a very mature manner and give deep consideration to their comments. Pupils clearly enjoy school, feel secure and appreciate what is done for them.
- 16 Each classroom and shared area in the school is very well organised with a high priority given to displaying pupils' work in a positive way. This is a large school spread across two major sites and to effect the level of organisation that exists is worthy of special note. Displays of pupils' work are particularly effective and give the school a stimulating and vibrant feel. This is helping pupils feel well cared for, appreciated and setting standards for them to follow. Resources are easily accessible in each classroom. Teachers have well organised systems to ensure their classrooms are both tidy and effective. The school library is set out in such a way that it is easy for pupils to find books that support their research work. Interactive whiteboards are very well used in each classroom. This has also helped staff feel more confident about using ICT to support pupils' learning in general. Staff have learnt to use the facility to support learning that could not otherwise be achieved. This is particularly the case when they are used as an interactive tool. This was seen at its best during mental and oral starter sessions in numeracy.
- 17 Pupils with special education needs are well taught and make very good progress as a result. They receive very good levels of support from teaching assistants when working within or outside the main classrooms. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that all pupils receive targeted support in response to their needs. The needs are identified

early and resources are used well to ensure that the work they receive is appropriate. The individual education plans form an important feature of the support they receive with teachers and support assistants' planning taking account of the specific need of each pupil. There is good provision for these pupils' pastoral care which, alongside the carefully targeted work they are given, ensures that they grow in confidence. The school uses appropriate commercial resources aimed at improving pupils' learning in mathematics and literacy to help ensure that the anticipated improvement is identified in small but appropriate steps.

- 18 The school is at stage of reviewing its assessment arrangements and has already identified the need to ensure that pupils are more involved in identifying their next area of learning. In some classes, such as Year 5 the principles outlined in this new system are already in place and working well. In these classes the targets pupils have are appropriate and focus on areas that will improve their learning. However, this is not a consistent picture throughout the school. There is good work happening in the foundation unit but at present the school is failing to build on this. There are pockets of good practice such as the Year 5 example already mentioned. In many other classes the marking of pupils' work, targets set and the way objectives are shared with pupils is not identifying clearly enough for individuals what it is they need to do in order to increase the rate of their progress. In most cases this is having an adverse affect on more able pupils' progress. As a result of the lack of clarity for the pupils and sometimes the staff these more able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged. The school has already adopted good practice in this area but it is not consistent enough with the implementation of its practice to allow all pupils to benefit or to allow all staff to feel secure in its use.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good and is supported by many very good opportunities for enriched learning.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs
- There are many very good examples of enrichment leading to enjoyment
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The provision for adult education at the school is very good
- There is inconsistency in the challenge provided for more able pupils and assessment information is not always used effectively to help pupils achieve their full potential

Commentary

- 19 The school ensures that pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum. There is a move to make this curriculum even more appropriate for pupils by working to a theme structure based around the six areas of learning identified for younger pupils. This is at an early stage of development. However, it does give a clear indication as to the school's desire to ensure that the curriculum is both excellent and enjoyable. The literacy and numeracy strategies are well founded and implemented and followed rigorously throughout the school. Systems of assessment, evaluation and monitoring do not as yet effectively inform the next steps for learning and target setting. More able pupils require more challenge, particularly in science, to achieve at the higher levels of attainment. However, overall there has been good curriculum improvement since the previous inspection.
- 20 The opportunities provided by the school for enriched learning are very good. The school makes very effective use of expertise from the wider community and provides a very good level of care for pupils outside school hours. Visiting artists, theatre groups and writers are very effectively used to enrich the arts curriculum. A writer in residence made a significant contribution to the improved standards attained by pupils in writing in Year 6. Links with secondary schools provide specialist scientific workshops for more able pupils. The science enhancement programme has enabled the school to set up links with local industry and

projects have included experiments that have a practical, industrial application. Teachers further enhance scientific projects by planning visits to the Catalyst Museum, Techniquet and the Discovery Centre.

- 21 A well known local football club has worked with the school to address issues of bullying and racism. In discussion, Year 6 pupils indicate that incidences of bullying are very rare at the school and are dealt with quickly and very effectively. Staff at the school have very positive attitudes towards providing pupils with a range of extra-curricular opportunities. These include Spanish, French, judo, basketball, gymnastics and many other sporting activities. As a consequence of these opportunities for enrichment pupils achieve very highly at sport. The school has achieved the Activemark Gold award. Dance is particularly popular with boys and girls. Year 2 and 6 pupils participated in the local dance festival at the Wirral's Pacific Theatre. Year 6 boys are coached by a specialist dance teacher and dance with very good levels of expression and enthusiasm. Projects in art, geography, history and science are further enhanced by regular visits to New Brighton, Port Sunlight and Birkenhead Priory. The enriched curriculum also provides many parents with very good opportunities to extend their education through the specialist courses run for them. These are school based courses and many pupils benefit from extra support during lessons.
- 22 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this area of the school's work is very well led by an enthusiastic SENCO (special education needs co-ordinator). Very detailed tracking records ensure that the progress made by pupils is closely monitored and provision is tightly tailored to their needs. The computer suite is used on a daily basis to facilitate individual education plans and pupils make rapid progress in their reading skills. As a result of this 'Precision Learning' pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school. Teaching assistants are well trained and work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils work towards targets within individual education plans. All of these pupils have full access to the wider curriculum and levels of inclusion are high. All pupils identified receive extra support. A range of successful support strategies are used including both class based and withdrawn support. Withdrawn support is very precisely timetabled by the SENCO to ensure minimal disruption to the pupils' normal timetable. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and the SENCO arranges opportunities for these pupils to follow individual mathematics development plans within the computer suite. This is very effective in supporting vulnerable pupils at lunchtimes. Pupils can also attend a handwriting club and within a two week period make rapid progress. Extra opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in circle times and learning mentors have received specialist training.
- 23 The quality of accommodation is good and governors have successfully re-furnished virtually all of the school. Displays are of a high standard and the buildings provide pupils with a bright, stimulating and safe environment for learning. The two school libraries are well organised and used well by both staff and pupils to support projects and learning. It is very evident that pupils are proud of their school and play their part, through a very active school council, to suggest and action improvements. In particular, the governors and the whole school community have created very stimulating and practical areas for school sport and pupils' play. Interactive screens, which are a feature in each classroom, are very effectively used by teachers to enhance learning across the curriculum. The 'cages' are very effective innovations and particularly enrich the opportunities to develop sporting skills. The outside play area for the foundation stage of learning is also very good and enables the school to deliver the curriculum for pupils in their early years. A nature area and other external areas are often used by teachers to support investigational activities. The school caretaker and the cleaning team ensure that pupils and staff enjoy a healthy and clean environment.
- 24 The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. The subject leader has achieved nationally recognised certification and the school is close to achieving a 'bronze' award in this area of its work. It is taught by all teachers and delivered through discrete lessons, cross curricular contexts and circle time. Half termly themes include bullying, friendship, emotions, healthy eating and safety. Three members of staff are assigned responsibilities in this area of the school's work and the implementation group included

governor representation and an Education Welfare Officer.

Care, guidance and support

The systems and procedures used to support pupils' care, guidance and welfare are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systems to ensure the health, safety and well being of all pupils are very good
- Pupils and all adults in the school show very high levels of mutual trust and respect
- The school regularly seeks pupils' views through a very enthusiastic schools council and involves them very well in its work
- Support, advice and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Sufficiently high levels of challenge are not consistently provided for more able pupils

Commentary

- 25 The school provides a very happy, safe and caring environment for all its pupils. The strong ethos throughout the school has care and concern for children at its centre. The openness and confidence with which pupils approach adults in the school to celebrate or raise concerns reflects the high level of mutual trust and respect between adults and pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and offer good quality advice and guidance. Health and safety requirements are met fully and regular inspections of the premises and procedures by nominated staff and governors. The school complies fully with the Area Child Protection Procedures and designated staff liaise with other agencies to identify and monitor school responses to children's specific needs and requirements. The school and governors follow the Local Authority guidance to ensure necessary procedures are followed for the numerous educational visits.
- 26 Arrangements for first aid, accident and emergency procedures are good. A new recording system identified issues related to specific times of the day. Consequent staggering of lunch and break times significantly reduced incident levels. The school has gained the National Healthy Schools Award and uses this programme to successfully raise pupils' awareness and understanding of the elements of healthy diets, lifestyles and staying safe. The schools council is seeking to establish a 'healthy eating' tuck shop. The school promotes extensive and successful sports and recreational programmes and provides access for all pupils. Parents and outside agencies are involved effectively in supporting these initiatives with the school. Parents are consulted thoroughly about medical or specific requirements of their children ensuring arrangements are safe and manageable. Provision for equal opportunities and sex education is successfully modelled on and in line with the detailed Local Authority guidance.
- 27 The systems for monitoring academic progress are good overall and indicate clearly the progress of individual pupils. This information is used particularly effectively in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Advice, guidance and support for these children is very well managed and effective. Good quality individual educational plans provide clear targets for literacy, numeracy and personal development of pupils is very well supported in the classrooms by learning assistants. They successfully ensure pupils are fully included in lessons and make good progress. The increase in the number of support assistants, as well as support from the extended school's training programme, has impacted significantly pupils' learning and progress.
- 28 The underperformance of more able pupils is identified but planned support, advice and guidance are inconsistent. Expectations are insufficiently high to raise pupils' levels of achievement particularly in whole class and plenary teaching sessions where opportunities to target more able pupils through open questions or investigational approaches are

underused. The increased use of differentiated tasks in ability groups is improving this element of lessons.

- 29 Pupils enjoy school and like their teachers and support staff. They feel valued and contribute confidently and significantly to the efficiency of general routines and organisation of the school day. Elected pupils engage enthusiastically in the school council. This is well structured to gain the views of pupils throughout the school and meets with the headteacher and senior staff on a regular basis. Pupil consultation has directly influenced the provision of playground furniture and the planning of new arrangements for break and lunch times. Apart from regular meetings with every class and year group, pupils can respond through a personal note system about things that have made them happy or sad. Elected pupils illustrate their understanding of the sensitivities and integrity essential to operating this system and express their confidence in its success.
- 30 Induction procedures are very good. Home visits are made in the foundation stage to establish good links between families and the school. Opportunities are developing to extend these contacts through the breakfast and after school care facilities. Good relationships are forged with parents and lead to effective contacts to help children settle well in school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's very strong partnership with parents, very good links with the community and good links with other schools have a significant impact on pupils' learning and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school
- The very strong partnership between home and school supports pupils' learning well
- The school has particularly strong links with its locality
- The way in which the school's adult educational programme meets the needs of the community is outstanding
- The provision of high quality all day child-care provides a valuable service to the community

Commentary

- 31 Over two thirds of parents completed the pre-inspection questionnaire and their responses reveal very strong support for all aspects of the school's provision. The only area which concerned a small minority of parents was the issue of bullying. However, extensive discussions with pupils show that most pupils do not consider this to be an issue and when incidents occur the school always follows them up. Parents support the school very effectively. The small but active Parent Teacher Association raises useful sums of money for the school through its social and fundraising events. Several parents provide help in the classroom and parents also help with the implementation of initiatives such as the 'School Travel Plan' and 'Healthy Schools'.
- 32 Parents are keen to support their children's education and the school encourages this very effectively. Strong parent support for learning is very well established from the time children start school in the foundation stage through very good information brochures, meetings, appropriate homework, and through the popular and oversubscribed course 'Family Works'. Throughout the school, attendance at parent teacher interviews is excellent and attendance at curriculum and other meetings is very good. The school provides parents with much good quality information including information each term about the curriculum and the homework schedule, and the good support which most parents give to the school's homework policy has a positive impact on their children's progress.

- 33 The school makes very good use of the locality and its links with community agencies and other schools. Visits to places of interest and visitors to school are used very effectively to enhance and enrich the curriculum. Visits to different parts of Wallasey enliven geography and history for pupils and help to stimulate art work. There are very good links with the local churches, the library and with sporting bodies. There are many good links with local secondary schools. For example, pupils benefit from basketball coaching and have participated in a science week and during the inspection Year 2 pupils and Year 6 boys performed very expressive dances at a dance festival organised by the local sports partnership.
- 34 The school provides an excellent service to the community by running 'NVQ Level 3' courses for adults on key skills and classroom support. These courses are very well managed by an assistant headteacher and are heavily over-subscribed. They provide a successful route into employment for those who complete the course and trainees also provide the school with valuable extra classroom assistance.
- 35 Another vital service which the school provides for the community is the St George's Dragon Club. This consists of breakfast, after-school, holiday and wrap around care. Parents are very appreciative of this high quality provision and it is clear that the pupils who attend the clubs enjoy them and are given a real voice in their running.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and key staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking the steps necessary to secure further improvement.
- The school analyses performance data accurately and takes appropriate action in order to raise standards.
- The headteacher provides a clear and innovative direction for curriculum development that is followed by all staff.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are not being implemented as fully as they should be.
- The management of special educational needs is very good.
- The governing body is knowledgeable about the school and provides both strong support and vigorous challenge to senior managers.
- The very good quality of its administration ensuring the smooth running of the school and a warm welcome for parents and other visitors

Commentary

- 36 Staff and governors are fully committed to providing a high quality of education for all pupils. The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership in directing the school's efforts towards building upon its major strengths and securing improvements in less successful areas. This strong sense of direction is expressed in the priorities found in the school improvement plan. Accurate analysis of most recent national test data revealed that whilst the school's recent focus upon improving standards in writing has been successful, standards in mathematics and science have not improved as rapidly as anticipated. As a result, these two subjects are a major focus for improvement this year.
- 37 The headteacher and Governing Body have recently revised the school's management structure, with four assistant headteachers each leading a team within a major area of the school's work. This structure has been in place for almost a full school year and the effective way it operates shows that senior staff are providing clear leadership. All staff know therefore what to do in their respective roles. In addition, the headteacher is providing innovative

leadership of the curriculum through the process of aligning it to match the six areas of learning taught in the foundation stage. This process is still in an early stage but offers rich opportunities to develop key skills across a broad range of subjects. Staff teams have been formed to focus upon each area of learning and upon ICT. Early signs are that these teams are working effectively and that staff are enthusiastic about the changes being made.

- 38 The management of subject areas is generally good. However, budget restraints have meant that the monitoring of teaching and learning through observation of lessons has not been undertaken as fully as it should. This means that an issue such as the challenge provided for more able pupils has not been addressed as swiftly as it should have been. Very good management of special educational needs ensures that pupils with special needs are identified very early in their school career. They are supported very effectively by well-trained teaching assistants and their progress is checked closely. Very well-devised individual learning programmes make best use of computer technology and result in pupils making good progress. Very good arrangements for learning support provided at lunchtime by the special educational needs' co-ordinator also contribute strongly to pupils' progress and well-being.
- 39 The day-to-day administration of the school is very good. In this very large school, administrative staff ensure routines and procedures operate smoothly. Communications between the school's two sites are very good. At both sites, visitors are made to feel welcome and a very good first impression of the school is received.
- 40 The Governing Body keeps an effective watch over the work of the school. It provides a good balance of challenge and support to school managers – vigorous debate about the right course of action to take on any particular issue is a regular feature of its meetings. Governors keep themselves well informed of the day-to-day work of the school. They do this through visits as part of taking special responsibility for a curriculum area or other aspect of the school's work and, in the Curriculum Committee, by receiving presentations from subject co-ordinators. The governors' Finance and General Purposes Committee, working in partnership with the headteacher, oversees financial management effectively. The school budget is used prudently, with governors active in seeking to apply best value principles for the benefit of pupils. The governing body fulfils all its statutory obligations.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,820,257	Balance from previous year	41,256
Total expenditure	1,885,002	Balance carried forward to the next	- 23,489
Expenditure per pupil	2,339		

- 41 The cost of educating pupils at the school is well below average and pupils receive a good quality of education overall, with particular strengths in personal development, care and welfare. Most groups of pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. In the light of all this, the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 42 Provision in the foundation stage is good. Most children start school with levels of attainment that match those expected for their age. They make good progress and achieve well and the majority of children are likely to at least reach the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the end of their reception year. Most children are likely to exceed them in personal social and emotional development. Children with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support they receive. Children are taught on a part-time basis in the nursery and in three reception classes. The very good induction procedures and information to parents ensure that the children settle quickly into school routines. The quality of teaching is good and all adults work very effectively as a team, with a good understanding of how children of this age learn. Curricular planning is good and children are provided with a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their learning needs. These are carefully balanced between activities that children choose for themselves and those that are directed by adults. Good assessment procedures ensure that children's progress is carefully tracked and recorded and the information gathered is used well to plan the next stages of learning. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and are very effectively involved in their learning through initiatives such as the weekly 'Family Works' project. Accommodation and resources are good overall and used well to support learning. The foundation stage is well led and managed and there has been good improvement since the last inspection, especially in the outdoor provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and the wide range of activities provided enables the children to develop confidence and independence
- Very good relationships and clear routines ensure that children feel safe, secure and happy
- Children have very good attitudes to school and to learning and they behave very well

Commentary

- 43 Children's personal skills are developed very effectively across all areas of learning and as a result, they achieve well. Children enjoy coming to school and are very well cared for in a friendly, safe and secure learning environment. Adults form very good relationships with all the children, who work and play happily with each other. This develops good personal skills as they take turns, share resources and handle equipment with care. A well planned range of activities successfully develops the children's confidence and independence. For example, nursery children 'self register' at each session, reception children decide for themselves when to have their drink and fruit and all children work well independently of adults during 'choice' activities. Teaching is good and the children show very good attitudes in lessons by listening attentively, following instructions carefully and concentrating well on tasks. This, together with their very good behaviour and the adults' good use of praise to boost the children's confidence and self esteem, has a very positive impact on their learning. The majority of children are likely to exceed the early learning goals as they finish their reception year.

Communication, Language and Literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, children achieve well and most are well on their way to reaching the goals expected in this area of learning
- A good range of opportunities and activities are provided to promote communication, language and literacy skills in all areas of learning
- More structured adult intervention is needed in some activities to develop further the children's language skills

Commentary

44 Children are developing good speaking and listening skills across all areas of learning as they talk about their work and personal experiences and chat happily with their friends. Adults use questioning well to involve all children in discussions and successfully encourage them to communicate their ideas and opinions. Children enjoy dressing up and role play activities, but there is not always enough structured adult intervention during these activities to develop further the children's imaginative and descriptive language. Most children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and show a good understanding of the main characters and events, which they can retell accurately. Children's reading skills are effectively developed in the shared reading sessions where they use picture cues and their secure knowledge of letter sounds and key words well to read the text. The children incorporate these appropriately into their own writing and all children make good progress, working to the best of their capabilities, as they write for different purposes. The good range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, is used well in all reception classes to foster enjoyment in books and to research information. Teaching is good and teaching assistants work very effectively with small groups of children to support all aspects of language development. As a result, children achieve well and most are on course to at least reach the goals expected by the end of their reception year.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, work is well matched to the children's needs and as a result the children achieve well
- Resources are good and children enjoy the practical activities provided for them
- Some activities need more adult intervention to further develop the children's mathematical understanding

Commentary

45 Good teaching and a wide range of practical activities, such as counting and sorting objects, sequencing patterns, measuring and shape work contribute effectively to the children's mathematical development. The nursery children are beginning to recognise and order numbers to 9 and the reception children build well on this as they accurately sequence numbers to 20 and beyond. Work is well matched to the children's needs and most children use their secure understanding of number to solve and record simple problems such as adding two digits together to 5 and 10, with the more able children adding and subtracting to 20. Number rhymes and counting during registration and snack time effectively re-enforce learning as do the mathematical games the children play on the computer. Mathematical language is effectively developed as children count and weigh out ingredients when making

animal biscuits, compare different sized objects and make patterns using common two dimensional shapes. However, adults miss opportunities during sand and water play to further develop children's understanding of different measures. Children enjoy their work, showing good levels of concentration during all activities and presenting their written recording neatly. This has a positive impact on their learning and as a result they achieve well. Most children are on course to reach the goals expected as they move into Year 1, with some likely to exceed them.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

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

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Teaching is good and as a result, children achieve well
- A varied range of activities makes learning interesting and fun
- Resources, visits and visitors to the school effectively enhance children's learning

Commentary

46 Well planned, interesting activities successfully widen the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Children in both the nursery and the reception classes are highly motivated by their current topic about wild animals. The wide range of practical activities, the good use of books and resources and visits to a nearby zoo and safari park effectively develop their knowledge of many animals. Good emphasis is placed on carrying out simple investigations such as mixing ingredients and rolling out pastry for animal biscuits, an activity in which the teachers skilfully linked science, language and mathematical development. Children are given good access to computers. They enjoy this work and control the mouse well as they move icons around the screen to "dress Teddy" or draw and paint pictures of animals. The sequencing of "then and now" pictures introduce the children effectively to the concept of the passage of time, and visitors to the school further enrich the children's learning experiences by talking about their everyday work and how they help others. Children have a secure understanding of some Old Testament stories and they learn about the customs and beliefs of others through the celebration of Diwali and Chinese New Year. Teaching is good and children are successfully encouraged to use their literacy and creative skills to record their learning. As a result they achieve well and most are on course to at least reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Physical Development

Provision for physical development is **good**

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well
- Children enjoy the varied range of activities provided to develop their physical skills
- The outdoor area has been considerably improved and is used well to promote learning

Commentary

47 Well planned physical activities promote enjoyment in learning and help the children develop good control and co-ordination skills. The children use a variety of cutting and sticking equipment, paintbrushes, pencils and small construction kits which effectively develop their manipulative skill. In physical education lessons the children are developing an appropriate awareness of space as they run, jump and jog around the hall, stopping and starting well at given signals. The outdoor play areas, a very good improvement since the last inspection, are effective teaching and learning resources. Together with the hall, they are used well on a

daily basis to allow freedom of movement and the use of a very good range of wheeled toys, and large play and climbing equipment, which effectively develop the children's balancing, sliding and climbing skills. Teaching is good, the children achieve well and most are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

Creative Development

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, children enjoy creative activities and as a result they achieve well
- A good range of practical activities is provided which are effectively linked to other areas of learning
- Some activities need more structured adult intervention

Commentary

48 Children have good, well planned opportunities to draw, paint pictures and make models using a variety of media. They develop good observational skills as they are taught to look closely at pictures and models when drawing and painting animals. Work is successfully linked to other areas of learning as, for example, nursery children make a large collaborative display of the story of "The Very Hungry Caterpillar", illustrating effectively the life cycle of a butterfly and consolidating counting to 5. Reception children construct large three dimensional models of wild animals, use a computer program to paint pictures to illustrate their literacy work and make large collage flowers as they learn about plants. Children enjoy the dressing up and the role play activities connected with their topics but sometimes these activities need more structured adult intervention to further develop children's imaginative and descriptive language. Nursery children explore the sounds made by different musical instruments and some can maintain a steady beat. All children enthusiastically join in singing rhymes, adding actions when appropriate. Teaching is good, the children achieve well and most are on course to achieve the goals expected as they move into Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National Curriculum test results are very good for reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and good for English at the end of Year 6
- Teaching is good – being at its best in Year 5
- There is effective leadership of the subject
- The level of challenge provided for more able pupils varies according to different parts of the lessons
- There has been good attention to helping pupils improve their writing and this is beginning to have an impact on standards
- Pupils show good enthusiasm for learning
- Pupils use their literacy skills well across the curriculum

Commentary

- 49 Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently above the level expected nationally. These standards replicate those at the time of the last Inspection. However, the percentage of children achieving Level 5 at the end of Year 6 is only generally satisfactory. From average attainment on entry in the Foundation Stage, pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- 50 Pupils' listening skills are good. Teachers' expectations of pupils' listening skills are high and pupils nearly always respond well. On the few occasions when their attention wanders, it is because the lesson is insufficiently engaging. Pupils respond well to the encouragement and intelligent questioning that they receive in most lessons, and particularly in Year 5 where pupils' very good attitudes result in them being courteous and listening to each other. This has a significant impact on attainment. However, there was no evidence of a specific focus on speaking skills in some lessons, despite the fact that the end of lesson sessions provides an ideal forum for doing so. Assessment opportunities for speaking and listening have recently been put into place. However, these are yet to be analysed formally.
- 51 Reading standards are good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have 'Reading Journals', from which they are able to select aspects for study, relevant to the lessons taught. Year 5 and 6 Reading Journals have a greater focus on the development and extension of writing. Reading sessions in school are of a good quality. Teachers pose a range of questions to build pupils' understanding of the text, and this ensures that pupils' ability to understand what they have read develops in line with their ability to read words on a page. As a result, pupils' enjoy their lessons, they listen attentively, behave well and most work hard.
- 52 Standards in writing are well above average by the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not clear enough what they need to do next to improve their work, because the link between targets, marking and evaluation of success is not yet developed sufficiently. Pupils in Year 2 are able to write with interest for an audience, using clear, descriptive language. They understand the differences between story writing and other types of writing, for example, poetry. There are planned opportunities to develop handwriting in Years 1 and 2 and spellings are developed through the national Literacy Framework. In Years 3 and 4 spelling and handwriting strategies are linked well. At Year 6 pupils can successfully interweave dialogue, action and description in their writing, using unanswered questions to cause greater suspense e.g. "Who, or what is

this race which seemingly opposes our invincible superiority?" These pupils access differentiated spelling using ICT.

- 53 Classroom assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They have excellent relationships with children, as seen in the interaction and effective support they provide to pupils with special educational needs. A very good example of this was seen in Year 4, when the support assistant contributed very well to the pupils' learning and overall achievement by posing skilful questions to encourage participation.
- 54 Assessment information is not always used as effectively as it could to help pupils achieve to their full potential. There is some inconsistency in approach between classes, which means that some pupils know less about how they need to improve over time, than others. This reduces the effectiveness of their learning. This is particularly the case when it comes to helping staff, pupils and their parents to become fully involved in making sure that challenging targets for improvement are met. Although teachers use a variety of approaches, lessons and marking of work do not always provide opportunities for pupils to become involved in working toward the next level of National Curriculum attainment.
- 55 Teaching and learning is good, with most teachers having a secure knowledge of the subject. Planning is detailed and matched clearly to pupils' needs. However, insufficient challenge for more able pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6 adversely affects progress and achievement. Teachers make clear to pupils what is expected of them in terms of learning. The pace and level of demand placed upon most pupils is good, allowing pupils to consolidate previous learning. Pupils are managed very well, and as a result, most classrooms are quiet places where learning is taking place. Very good relationships exist between pupils' and teachers and pupils' attitudes towards the subject are good. They concentrate and work hard in lessons. Teachers are less effective at using the plenary session at the end of the lesson to assess pupils' learning and at involving pupils in this process. While there is some effective use being made of ICT as a teaching tool in lessons, more use could be made on a regular basis to support the learning of English. A good example of interactive whiteboard use to enhance collaborative learning and discussion by pupils was seen in Year 2.
- 56 Leadership and management are good. The 'Language Team' check planning and scrutinise pupils' work, using the information to identify areas for improvement. However, insufficient opportunities exist to observe the quality of teaching and learning and to involve pupils in self-evaluation strategies evolving from pupil discussion. The headteacher rigorously monitors standards of teaching and learning and takes action to ensure that high standards are maintained.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

- 57 Language and literacy skills are taught well and pupils are given a range of opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. Literacy linked to Islam was evident in display work within Year 3. Teachers place an emphasis on pupils' learning subject-specific vocabulary in order that they can discuss their ideas more accurately, and a specific example of this was seen in Year 2, where geographical vocabulary was used to extend pupils' writing skills. Pupils write confidently and use this to record their learning in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain standards that are above average

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics
- Interactive whiteboards are used very effectively by teachers and have a significant impact on pupils' learning
- Good use is made of teaching assistants to work with small groups of pupils with special educational needs
- The level of challenge for more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent and often insufficiently high in investigational and problem solving work

Commentary

- 58 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress and consistently attain well above nationally expected levels in national tests. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment was in line with nationally levels in 2004 but there has been improvement as noted with the current Year 6. However, not enough pupils at attaining at the higher level (Level 5) which is contrast to the above average number that attain the expected level for their age (Level 4). These results are in compared to all schools nationally and those in similar contexts.
- 59 In Years 1 and 2 pupils develop a good grasp of basic number knowledge and recall. They show a good range of strategies in mental and oral work and successfully use counting on, counting back, doubling and halving and number squares in addition and subtraction. Pupils apply these approaches successfully in calculations and recognising number patterns, sequences and properties. They learn the different value of coins and a find a variety of ways in which fixed amounts of money can be made. Pupils measure with increasing accuracy and move effectively through a well planned programme from non-standard to metric measures. They work very effectively in paired and small group work using a good range of mathematical vocabulary with accuracy and understanding. Practical and visual resources are readily available and used well by pupils to develop good levels of understanding.
- 60 In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to develop their good facility with number. They use number lines very effectively and older pupils develop the use of blank number lines to support a number of calculations involving all number operations. They show a sound knowledge of regular two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and recognise common angles. Most recall successfully the definitions of perimeter and area and measure and calculate these accurately for regular shapes. More able pupils describe an investigation into the relationship between perimeter and area of different shapes and recognise the key variables. Pupils interpret tabulated information and accurately present this information graphically. They interpret features of the data successfully and use a range of terminology accurately. Pupils satisfactorily interpret the mathematics to solve problems presented in written contexts. More able pupils are generally given more difficult tasks during group work but their progress during whole class and plenary sessions is limited as the level of challenge is insufficiently high and pace is too slow. Teachers do not target more able pupils consistently with open questions which require more complex thinking or multiple answers.
- 61 Pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics. They are well motivated and keen to learn. The majority show good levels of confidence and use paired and small group work sessions well to develop their understanding and accurate use of vocabulary.
- 62 The quality of teaching is good across the school. Teachers' planning is thorough and provides good coverage of the programmes of study and national numeracy strategy. Mental and oral sessions are very good. Teachers encourage pupils' recall of previous knowledge well and use a good range of mathematical vocabulary to recognise number operations required in different contexts. Differentiation of group tasks to match different abilities is planned well and is often more precisely targeted than the stated learning objectives. The preparation for whole class introductory and plenary sessions does not accommodate pupils' different abilities as effectively. Timings of these sessions are often significantly extended and the pace and challenge for more able pupils is not sustained. The use of interactive

whiteboards is very successful in illustrating a range of strategies and encouraging pupils to test their accuracy and the efficiency of different methods. They provide good quality presentations which successfully sustain pupils' interest, excitement and motivation. Although pupils have limited direct access to the interactive whiteboard teachers make good use of individual boards and markers to check pupils' active involvement and understanding.

63 Mathematics is well managed across the school. Resources are well organised and accessible to pupils in classes or centralised areas. A good range of practical equipment is used well to support pupils' understanding of number and calculation. Leadership has identified the need for greater emphasis of problem solving and investigational approaches to provide greater challenge and opportunity for more able pupils to access higher levels of attainment. This is reflected in lesson observations and the school assessments predict significant increases in pupils' attainments at higher levels.

64 Teaching assistants provide very good support for targeted groups of pupils with special educational needs. Their very positive approaches and use of specific support materials and practical is very effective in maintaining pupils' enthusiasm and feeling of inclusion. Pupils respond positively, sustain their engagement and make appropriate progress. Teachers use the opportunity this support provides to address group and individual needs across the class.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65 The use of mathematics to support other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is successful in supporting projects such as 'Walk to School', continuous recordings of weather conditions and when mathematics provides a specific focus for shape and space projects. However these activities are not currently planned systematically to ensure an appropriate balance of the application of mathematics over time.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is satisfactory.

- Standards of pupils' work seen are in line with those expected for their age and achievement is satisfactory
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good
- Subject leaders have a clear vision for further improving standards achieved by pupils
- There is inconsistency in the challenge provided for more able pupils
- Assessment information is not always used effectively to help pupils achieve their full potential

Commentary

66 Standards of work seen in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected for their age and achievement, in relation to prior attainment, is satisfactory. This represents an improving situation due to the introduction of a wider range of investigational experiences for pupils. Pupils are reaching satisfactory standards in their knowledge and understanding and there is no difference in the standards attained by boys and girls.

67 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Lessons are well prepared and resources for lessons are good. The subject knowledge of teachers is improving through the good use teachers are making of the local authority's science scheme and the sharing of expertise. As a result of this improving subject knowledge, lessons are delivered with increasing confidence and structure. This is resulting in the improving standards in the subject. Occasionally teachers confuse the lesson objective with the lesson's activity. As a result key scientific skills lose their significance. Classrooms are well organised and

teachers use good strategies to ensure that pupils are very well behaved. During lessons pupils are given a good range of opportunities to work co-operatively and independently. In Year 5, where teaching is very good, the teacher created a group game for pupils that successfully encourage pupils to devise a range of information gathering questions. Pupils show high levels of enjoyment and successfully raise their knowledge and understanding of the relationship between animals and their habitats. In Year 4 teachers make effective use of the school grounds to support the development of pupils' investigational skills. As a result of this good work pupils are able to distinguish between fibrous roots and tap roots with accuracy and confidence. Again, they show high levels of enjoyment during this investigation.

- 68 Teachers make effective use of interactive boards during all lessons and this resource adds significantly to pupils' levels of understanding and their enjoyment of lessons. Where pupils use individual whiteboards during some lessons teachers are able to monitor carefully individual understanding. In Year 5 pupils are encouraged to formulate their own suggestions using whiteboards. Talking partners (a system where pupils are asked to share their understanding before committing answers to the full class) is also used effectively by some teachers to give pupils a greater range of individual opportunities for thinking, speaking and listening. Homework is effectively used by teachers to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' work is conscientiously marked by teachers but marking does not consistently inform pupils about how they can improve. Assessment systems are not consistently used to set targets for improvement or to effectively inform planning for more able pupils. As a result, too few more able pupils are achieving at the higher levels of attainment at the end of Year 6. Generally, teachers do achieve consistency across year groups through team planning. However, pupils' workbooks in Year 6 indicate some inconsistency in delivery between the classes.
- 69 Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and very well behaved. Their work is consistently neat and well presented. In a number of lessons pupils gasp with excitement prior to investigations. In discussion, Year 6 pupils are very positive about their experiences in science and are able to recall previous learning in some detail including the solar system, electricity, forces, the functions of the heart, germination and materials. They are able to outline the key characteristics of fair testing. However, more able pupils feel that they need more challenge during lessons that revise previous learning. During lessons pupils are keen to contribute and work very co-operatively with other pupils. High levels of mutual respect are apparent during lessons.
- 70 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Subject leaders have a clear vision for the future improvement of the subject. They are developing systems for assessment that will be used to better inform target setting and teacher planning particularly for more able pupils. They are implementing the local authority's science scheme and this is successfully raising levels of confidence for teachers in delivering the science curriculum. The new scheme is very effectively helping teachers to develop a range of investigational experiences for pupils. Subject leaders are also planning further professional development opportunities for teachers and further opportunities for the sharing of expertise. These initiatives will effectively support consistency and continuity across the school. Monitoring in the subject needs a clearer focus on the quality of project outcomes particularly for more able pupils.
- 71 Good links with local secondary schools help the school to provide a science week and challenging projects. The science enhancement programme has enabled the school to set up links with local industry and projects have included experiments that have a practical application. A young scientist scheme is implemented and the school gained a Rolls Royce certificate. Teachers make effective use of local resources to support projects. Visits include the Discovery Centre, the Catalyst Museum and Techniquest. Teachers also provide science clubs for pupils across the age groups. This represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' mostly achieve well
- Some teaching is very good
- Resources are very good and are used well
- The use of assessment information is not sufficiently developed

Commentary

- 72 Standards match national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst this appears to represent a decline since the previous inspection, when standards at the end of Year 6 were judged to be above national expectations, the curriculum for ICT is now much more demanding as technology has grown rapidly in the past six years. In this context, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school has made great strides to provide the resources to match increasing curriculum demands. Pupils have access to a good number of very modern computers and a considerable range of software. All classes have interactive whiteboards. The curriculum is planned in detail to match national guidelines. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection is good.
- 73 Provided with such good resources, pupils respond very well to the learning opportunities their teachers set. Teaching is good overall, with the most effective teaching being observed in Year 5. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of ICT and this transmits itself to pupils, who in turn approach their learning with confidence. The tasks set for them are well matched to their attainments and as a result they achieve well. Achievement becomes very good when teachers present demanding tasks, explaining very clearly what pupils should do. Very good relationships and teachers' good skills of managing pupils' behaviour complete the foundation for successful learning. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. Their needs are recognised and addressed through careful planning and support. Teaching is less effective when the lesson's intended learning outcome is not addressed directly through the activities provided. As a result, whilst pupils use computers confidently, they lose sight of the focus for their learning.
- 74 Teachers assess the standards of pupils' work each half term. This provides an accurate view about attainment and has the potential to help teachers provide specific support to pupils. However, this use of assessment is under-developed as are opportunities to encourage pupils to evaluate their own and others' work. Teachers create effective learning environments and as a result pupils work well together at computers but the opportunity this presents for pupils to evaluate each other's work to shared criteria is not taken.
- 75 The subject team of teachers is providing good leadership through example and good support for other staff. They ensure that the curriculum is enriched for gifted pupils by means of a lunchtime computer club whilst also providing a club for pupils in Year 2. Co-ordinators have an accurate view of the subject's strengths and areas for development. Clear, yet detailed, action plans point the way forward to improvement. However, opportunities for judging the quality of teaching and learning across the school are very limited and this prevents co-ordinators from gaining a full range of knowledge about subject quality.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 76 Throughout the school, teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards in the first parts of lessons in many subjects. Sometimes this technology is used to provide a quality of demonstration that would otherwise be impossible. At other times, pupils are encouraged to use the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate their understanding of a learning point. ICT is used very well in mathematics throughout the school in order to help pupils improve their skills of mental calculation. Older pupils enrich their confidence in data handling by the use of spreadsheets whilst younger ones create graphs to demonstrate basic skills of handling data. Teachers make good use of a variety of educational websites, both to interest pupils and to extend their learning, for example in science. Word processing skills are used widely to support literacy.

HUMANITIES

- 77 Leadership and management of humanities by the new 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World' team is **satisfactory** and at an early stage of development. A more rigorous approach is now needed to ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress between Year 1 and Year 6 in knowledge, skills and understanding in humanities.

History

- 78 Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make a secure judgment on the provision for history. No lessons were seen during the inspection. However evidence from pupils work indicates that an appropriate curriculum is available for pupils. The use of the internet for historical research is well developed in some year groups and the use of themed history days and weeks, for example VE day celebrations, Tudor day, Greek day, Ancient Egyptian day and the use of visits to local sites of historical importance enhance the history curriculum and make it more meaningful to pupils.

Geography

Provision in geography is satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the local surroundings to study geographical features and environmental issues
- Very good use of the interactive whiteboard by both class teacher and pupils in Year 4
- The progression in pupils' acquisition of geographical skills is not yet rigorously checked

Commentary

- 79 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and the quality of teaching is good. Work in Year 1 and 2 provides a balance of acquiring early map making skills and learning about how people live in other countries such as France. Pupils look at land use in Wallasey to see how humans have affected their environment. They are able to go out into the playground and look for signs of erosion deciding whether they are man made or caused by the weather.
- 80 As pupils progress from Year 3 to 6 they develop a vocabulary that is relevant to the work they are undertaking. Year 4 pupils have very good opportunities to develop the appreciation of climates other than their own. They plan expeditions to Polar Regions, the desert or the rainforest. The teacher's expertise in using the interactive whiteboard to support pupils' learning means that they have 'hands on' experience of using information technology in their geography lessons which adds to the quality of their learning. Year 6 pupils visit the coastline to identify physical or human uses of the land close to the beach in New Brighton.

- 81 Marking is not always consistent between classes and often does not show pupils how to improve their work. Informal, end of topic assessments are carried out from Year 1 to Year 6 but they lack rigour and this means that geographical skills are not regularly checked to ensure every child is making progress.

Religious education

- 82 Insufficient evidence was seen to make a secure judgment about provision in Years 3 to 6, therefore an overall judgment on provision in religious education could not be made

Strengths and Weaknesses

- Pupils Years 1 and 2 achieve well in religious education
- There are some inconsistencies in knowledge and understanding of religious education between classes and age groups in pupils aged 7 to 11
- Pupils show an appreciation of Christian principles of care, friendship, respect and understanding
- There are good links to local churches
- There are no assessment systems in place to monitor achievement in religious education

Commentary

- 83 Pupils achieve well in religious education in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is good. Teachers make learning about how to write prayers interesting and fun. Sensitive issues regarding writing prayers for parents who do not live together any more were handled well and pupils confident to respond with their ideas. In both lessons seen clear links were evident to promote and develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- 84 No lessons of religious education were seen in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection but work scrutiny and pupil discussion show that there are some inconsistencies of provision for religious education between year groups and classes. Discussion with Year 6 pupils indicates that there is some confusion about the different faith traditions they had studied and insufficient knowledge of stories from the Bible in either the Old or New Testaments. These pupils however had a strong sense of the importance of respecting those with beliefs different from their own and of care for their classmates. Work scrutiny of Year 5 folders show a wider range of work, carried out with a greater depth of understanding and the quality of this work is at the level expected for their age.
- 85 Links with local churches for Harvest and Christmas performances help pupils to learn about the places that people worship in Wallasey and help them to get to know the clergy in the parish. This effectively strengthens community links. The use of the literacy hour to provide opportunities for written work in religious education is underdeveloped as are links to other subjects, for example information and communication technology (ICT) to extend opportunities to enhance and extend the curriculum.
- 86 There are no assessment systems in place for religious education and marking is inconsistent. This means that children's achievements are not recorded and standards are not checked well enough.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 87 It was not possible to observe any lessons in music during the inspection and consequently there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement about provision in this subject. Only two

lessons were seen in art and design and one in design technology. It was however, possible to evaluate completed work in art and design and design technology, and to talk to pupils and examine portfolios of work.

Art and Design

88 A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that in art and design standards are in line with national expectations. There is a good range of art work in classroom displays, in corridors and the main library. This indicates that pupils have experiences of working with a wide range of media such as clay, printing materials, pastels and paint. The displays were often lively and interesting with pupils showing imagination to produce good quality finished pieces. In Year 6, pupils who were asked were realistically critical of their work, offering very good ideas about how it could have been improved, suggesting that evaluations are also encouraged.

Design and Technology

89 Although there is insufficient information to judge achievement and teaching and learning, evidence shows that the curriculum for Design and technology provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to learn. In discussion Year 5 pupils detail enthusiastically the things they have made and the projects they have been involved in. It was apparent from the manner in which the pupils described how they went about their work that they had been taught good skills and safe practices. The quality of the teaching and learning in the lesson observed was good. Planning indicated that the National Curriculum requirements of designing, making and evaluating artefacts and products are understood clearly by the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs make similar models and artefacts as other pupils and their achievements are also similar, owing to good support when they require it. A good emphasis is placed on accurate planning, measuring and completion of a task.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is good.

Main strengths

- Teaching and learning are good.
- The pace of the lessons is good and pupils fully understand what is expected of them.
- Pupils work well together.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and attain above average skills in lessons.

Commentary

90 Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve well in physical education and that standards are above national expectations. In the lessons observed, pupils show a wide range of skills, they are able to throw and catch balls and their movements are well coordinated. The lessons were characterised by good subject knowledge, which was used to plan physically challenging activities for all pupils to undertake in the lesson. The pupils work well individually, in small groups and in teams and show very good attitudes towards the elements of competition, such as fairness, response to decisions, winning and losing and supporting their peers. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the lesson and the teacher engages them in learning very effectively, as a result they achieve well.

91 Lessons regularly begin with effective warm-up sessions which combine exercise with an element of fun. Pupils understand and are able to explain the importance of warming up and have a regard for health and safety issues. Teaching assistants could impact more positively on pupil learning by engaging themselves more in the lesson activities. The lessons are conducted at a good pace, which ensures close involvement by pupils. The teachers ensure

that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to fully participate in the lesson. Teaching and learning are good overall and pupils achieve well.

- 92 A selection of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were involved in a dance festival organised by the Sports Partnership Development Manager. The Year 2 group performed 'Keep the Customer Satisfied' and the Year 6 group performed 'Bump in the Night'. Both dances were very well executed. The pupils threw themselves into the action, kept rhythm well, remembered the sequences and acted the movement with a very good level of expression.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships between teachers and pupil's give pupils the confidence to share their ideas and opinions.
- Topics covered prepare the pupils very well to take their place within the community.

Commentary

- 93 The very good provision in this area of learning permeates all aspects of the school's work. It contributes in great measure to the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development, which in turn has a positive impact on their overall achievement. Outside agencies are used effectively to support a very well planned programme of work which provides for the continuous development of pupils' awareness of citizenship, healthy and safe lifestyles and personal growth and relationships, including sex and drugs education. It is promoted well across most subjects and through designated PSHCE lessons and a very good range of after school clubs and sporting and creative activities. Visits, visitors to the school and fund raising events for charity further enhance provision. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn respect for the values and beliefs of others and to develop their own self worth and confidence. The effective use of suggestion boxes in each class and the very good relationships at all levels give pupils the confidence to discuss and resolve matters of importance or concern to them. Pupils' awareness of citizenship is effectively enhanced by the democratic election of the School Council, which enables pupils to have a real say in school improvement. Councillors take their responsibilities very seriously discussing sensibly the views brought to them by other pupils. The school values highly what they have to say and acts upon their suggestions wherever possible, giving pupils a real sense of pride and ownership in their school. Within the school's inclusive and very caring ethos all pupils feel personally valued and they gain in confidence and self esteem. As a result, they become caring, mature and responsible young people who are very well prepared for life beyond school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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