

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BELLE VALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Belle Vale Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104519

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Potter

Reporting inspector: Heather Williams  
22284

Dates of inspection: 15 October –19 October 2001

Inspection number: 185806

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Besford Road  
Belle Vale  
Liverpool

Postcode: L25 2QF

Telephone number: 0151 487 8571

Fax number: 0151 283 4395

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Blackburne

Date of previous inspection: 5 – 6 October 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22284	Heather Williams	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p>
9907	William Orr	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
15292	Jan Pollard	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>History</p> <p>Geography</p>	
29688	Mike Brammer	Team inspector	English	<p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>Equal Opportunities</p>
22644	Barbara Hill	Team inspector	<p>Foundation Stage</p> <p>Religious Education</p>	<p>Spiritual, moral, social and culture development</p>
15150	Susan Wilkinson	Team inspector	<p>Design and technology</p> <p>Art and design</p> <p>Music</p>	<p>Special educational needs</p> <p>English as an additional language</p>
10120	Philip Crookall	Team inspector	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Information &amp; communication technology</p> <p>Physical education</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Belle Vale Community School is situated on the outskirts of Liverpool serving both privately owned and local authority housing. The school has facilities for up to ten hearing impaired pupils. There are 326 pupils in the main stream and 35 children in the nursery who attend either morning or afternoon. This school is larger than other primary schools. Children enter nursery with below average attainment. Fifty-two percent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is considerably higher than the national average. One hundred and one pupils have designated special educational needs of whom six have a formal statement.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

School effectiveness is satisfactory. Standards of attainment in English are below and mathematics well below the national average at the age of 11; however, in relation to similar schools, standards are well above average in science and English and below in mathematics. Considering the below average starting point at the baseline assessment, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear educational direction. Teaching overall is satisfactory with just under half the lessons observed being good or better. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The headteacher with the support of the senior management provides good leadership and educational direction.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the majority of pupils are good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning and to school.
- Teachers make good use of support staff.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The school has a good strategy for appraisal and performance management.
- For Child Protection the school has developed good procedures and generally ensures pupils' welfare.
- Good use is made of resources, including specific grants.
- For English, mathematics and science (the core subjects) there are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, art and music throughout both key stages.
- Attendance.
- Use of assessment in the foundation subjects to guide curricular planning and learning.
- The contribution of the community to pupils' learning.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In 1997 the school became subject to special measures. The school was inspected in October 1999 and Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) subsequently removed the school from special measures. Satisfactory progress has been made with the majority of the key issues identified in the last report. English, especially writing, is still below national expectations for pupils aged 7 and 11; however, the school has a good monitoring system and analysis of the data for this subject is very detailed. The school as a whole is working very hard to improve standards in English. Standards have risen in mathematics and have remained the same in science during the intervening years for results in the Key Stage 2 statutory assessment tests (SATs). Precise learning objectives are evident in the planning for all subjects and they are shared with the pupils. There has been staff development that focused on improving the teachers' knowledge in literacy and numeracy and both strategies are satisfactorily taught throughout the school. A new co-ordinator, appointed to lead the foundation stage, ensures time allocation is sufficient for adults to work directly and effectively with the children in the nursery. The governing body is now taking a more active role in shaping the direction of the school.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	C	D	A	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average    E
mathematics	E*	D	E	D	
science	D	E	B	A	

The above table shows that results in science were above average, English were low and mathematics very low when compared to schools nationally; however, when compared to similar schools standards in both English and science were well above average, though in mathematics the standards were still below average. The target set in English for 2001 was not met, but the target the school set for mathematics for 2001 was exceeded by 1.1 percent. The school does not appear to be on course to meet the targets set for 2002, especially in English, which is a very challenging target and not realistic from the standards seen in the work of pupils, in the present Year 6. Currently the standards in English are below what is expected nationally of a Year 2 and a Year 6 pupil and are unsatisfactory. During the inspection the standards seen in mathematics for pupils in Year 2 are above average and satisfactory for pupils in Year 6. Progress in the foundation stage is sound, but because children enter this stage with below average attainment they do not always achieve the early learning goals in all six areas by the time they enter Year 1, which is the beginning of Key Stage 1.

At the age of 7 pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing was below the national average. In mathematics the school's performance matched the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average in reading and writing and well above average for mathematics. The teachers' assessments for science in 2000 show that the performance of pupils aged 7 was below the national average, but above that of similar schools. The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 2 are below those expected for their age in speaking, reading and writing. In science standards are satisfactory and for mathematics standards are good for the majority of pupils.

Attainment is below national expectations for pupils aged 7 in art and design and music and well below in art and design and music for pupils aged 11. However, attainment is improving in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school due to the good provision. In all other subjects attainment is mainly in line with national expectations.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. SEN pupils have a good attitude to coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. The great majority display good behaviour both in lessons and at breaks. The majority move around the school in an orderly manner. In some lessons observed a small number of pupils displayed poor self-discipline. There were no fixed exclusions over the last two years.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy a wide range of responsibilities. The great majority show respect for their teachers. However a small number of pupils who misbehave have less understanding of the impact of their actions.
Attendance	Well below the national average.

Pupils are involved in a school council and take this very seriously. Pupils show respect for the head boy and girl and see their roles as being important throughout the school. There is an obvious enjoyment when pupils discuss their school. They take a pride in their school's appearance, as there was no litter to be seen in or around the school. Pupils were able to talk about the charities the school supports such as 'Love in a shoe box'. The pupils thought that 'it was kind and helpful'. The pupils felt the incentives that the school has organised for behaviour and attendance pupils were good. The attitudes of the other pupils to those with special educational needs are good. They are always ready to lend a hand where it is needed.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Nursery and Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Out of the 85 lessons or parts of lessons observed, in 43 lessons teaching was satisfactory. In 30 of the lessons teaching was good and in ten lessons teaching was very good. In two lessons observed teaching was unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection teaching has improved, as then four out of the 20 lessons observed were unsatisfactory. Teaching in the foundation stage is mainly good and very good. Teachers know and understand the early learning goals and along with good assessment plan targets that address the needs of the children. Overall the quality of teaching is good for pupils aged 5 to 7 in English and mathematics and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11. Good teaching occurs when the work is well planned and matches the prior attainment of the pupil, subject knowledge is secure and there is a good pace to the questions, which extends knowledge and learning. The teaching of SEN pupils is supportive and enables pupils to achieve appropriately. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils' individual educational plans and incorporate these targets into their work. Weakness occurs in teaching when teachers do not have sufficient skills and understanding and where work set does not help to accomplish the stated learning objectives for the lesson.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Generally a broad curriculum is provided for the subjects of the National Curriculum, but religious education does not have a sufficient allocation of time in Years 1,2, and 3. Current provision for art and design and music is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality and provision for SEN are good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	A small number of pupils have been identified and they are coping well in school. None of the pupils have been tested for 'fluency of English'.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall the provision is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils are clearly taught why actions are right or wrong. There are opportunities in and out of lessons for pupils to learn skills for playing and working together constructively.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for child protection and health and safety. The school takes good care of its pupils and provides good role models.

The school has overall a good relationship with parents and seeks to work closely with them on the education of their children. Parents support by attending such functions as harvest festival and assemblies, but they do not attend the annual parents'-governors'-meeting.

#### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is well supported by her senior management team. Together they provide strong support in guiding school improvements and establishing a good ethos for learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. The written and verbal reports from subject co-ordinators lead to a satisfactory understanding of the school's strength and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is effective in analysing its successes and areas for development. National and other test results are analysed to guide improvement in teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Financial and learning resources are well used to support pupils' learning. The school endeavours to get best value when making purchases.

The school has a clear equal opportunities policy that ensures the same breadth and equality of opportunity for all pupils, regardless of gender, religion or race. Levels of staffing are good and members of staff are effectively deployed. The accommodation is satisfactory and is improving. The school benefits from having a room specially designed for computers. The governing body is more effective than at the time of the previous inspection. The governors who are linked to numeracy and literacy are well informed.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behaviour within the school</li> <li>• The teaching</li> <li>• Being able to approach the school with problems</li> <li>• The expectations of school where work is concerned</li> <li>• Children being helped to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• Good progress in school</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The collaboration with parents</li> <li>• More information as to how their child is progressing</li> <li>• The range of activities provided for the children outside school</li> <li>• Children do not receive the appropriate amount of homework</li> </ul>

The inspectors would agree with the majority of parents' positive comments. However, although progress is good in the foundation stage it is not consistent throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Inspectors agree that homework provision and marking are inconsistent. Extra curricular activities are satisfactory and the school intends to increase the range where opportunities arise. The quality of information parents receive is good. The school places a high priority on working with and involving parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Standards achieved by pupils in national tests by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1 in the year 2000 were below the national average for reading and writing and in line with the national average for mathematics. When compared with similar schools both reading and writing were above the national average and mathematics well above the national average. The results for teachers' assessment in science were below the national average for Key Stage 1 in the tasks assessed by the school.
2. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, the performance of pupils aged 11 was well below the national average in mathematics, below the national average for English and above the national average for science. When compared with similar schools results were well above average for English and science and below average in mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) was well below the national average for mathematics, below the national average for English and close to the national average for science. However, when compared to similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was above the national average for science, close to the national average for English and below the national average in mathematics. When averaged out over the last three years, there were no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls within English, mathematics and science (the core subjects) and none were noted during the inspection. Over the past three years results in English and mathematics have fluctuated reaching a high in 1999, but declining in 2000. However, the trend has been overall improvement since 1998 in all three core subjects.
3. The majority of children entering the nursery classes have low levels of attainment, particularly in speaking and listening skills. Through good teaching in the foundation stage (nursery and reception classes) the children improve so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are on course to reach the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding and creative development.
4. SEN pupils are making satisfactory progress and a quarter of them are making good progress. The majority of pupils are meeting the targets in their individual education plans and a quarter of pupils are exceeding these. Pupils do move down the register of special educational needs and a few are taken off.
5. From a low starting point pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring listening skills. Speaking skills are still below average at the ages of 7 and 11 and although pupils speak confidently they do not use appropriate vocabulary for the context of the lessons. Teachers give their pupils the key vocabulary for the lessons, but they do not always ensure that pupils use it. In reading the majority of pupils' achievement is below average at both key stages. However, there are higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 who are achieving standards in line with the national average and above.

6. Pupils are weaker at writing than they are at reading. Since the last inspection the school has introduced a new policy for handwriting, which is having an impact, but pupils' incorrect pencil grip and letter formation are not consistently being challenged throughout the school and a significant number of pupils are forming bad habits. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is only the higher attainers who are writing in paragraphs. Vocabulary used is mundane and there is a lack of adventurous vocabulary in the pupils' work. Spelling is usually accurate. Pupils understand the structure of a sentence at the end of Key Stage 2 and are able to use subordinate clauses. At the end of Key Stage 1 higher attaining pupils write in sentences with simple connectives. Computers are not used sufficiently to improve the standard of writing.
7. In mathematics pupils' achievement at Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils are developing their mathematical vocabulary well. Number work is a strength, whereas work in problem solving and investigation is still being developed. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards show a steady improvement because teachers analyse assessment data well in order to guide their planning and organisation of the classes. Pupils at the end of this key stage have a sound knowledge of multiplication facts and can use multiplication grids successfully. The majority of pupils understand ratio and proportion and can successfully work with vulgar and decimal fractions. Problem solving and investigative work is still a weakness in Key Stage 2, but the school is aware of this and is addressing the problem. Data handling and statistical calculations are under developed. Pupils can represent information as a graph and use co-ordinates, but limited opportunities are given to explore and compare graphical display. Mathematics is used in other subjects of the curriculum especially in science, where weight and length measurement are used in experiments.
8. At the end of Key Stage 1 science is assessed by the teachers to be below the expected national level. No pupils are assessed to be working at the higher level 3 for this age group. By the time pupils are 7 there is evidence that pupils are learning through investigation. Help is given to the lower attaining pupils so that they can complete their tasks. Higher attainers are encouraged to work independently and produce their own written work. It is not until Key Stage 2 that pupils learn how to conduct a fair test through conducting investigations. Planning sheets are used to help pupils to discuss ideas and plan their experiments. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 are able to understand about how variables are used in scientific investigations. They are able to undertake a fair test and are able to explain the need for accuracy. Scientific language is used confidently, and work is linked to mathematics and data collection.
9. The attainment in art and design is below national expectations for ages 7 and 11. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' skills have not progressed from those acquired at the end of Key Stage 1. Previously learnt skills are not being built upon in a systematic manner. In a Year 2 class pupils were given a task during the inspection which was inappropriate as it demanded skills in drawing far beyond the pupils' capabilities. At the age of 11 pupils are still showing the same skills that pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 portray when asked to draw a self portrait. The range of artwork such as sculptures and textiles in 3D throughout the school is very limited and there are very few examples of computer generated graphic art.

10. In design and technology attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations, but is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This lack of progress between the two key stages is due to the fact that from Year 4 skills are not systematically built upon. Pupils in Year 6 designed slippers, but the process of designing these slippers did not show the different stages of design and the refinement of ideas. Pupils' evaluations are not sufficiently detailed. However, key vocabulary has been introduced. Information technology has not been used consistently to enhance attainment. SEN pupils make the same progress as others where practical skills are concerned.
11. Attainment in both history and geography is appropriate for pupils aged 7 and 11. During Key Stage 1 mapping skills are well introduced and through good use of the local environment pupils can differentiate between attractive and unattractive features. In Key Stage 2 most pupils, including those with special educational needs, show sound understanding of geographical features of the rainforest and surrounding areas. Pupils develop appropriate awareness of places through the good use of reference books. In history pupils at the age of 7 study famous people, events and means of travelling. At Key Stage 2 pupils show secure knowledge of relevant historical facts about the Victorian era and the Tudor period. The younger pupils within Key Stage 2 use group research to find out about ancient Egypt.
12. In ICT pupils by the age of 7 are attaining higher than the expected standards for their age. However, by the age of 11 attainment is in line with national expectation. Pupils are able to translate designs from 2D to 3D. They can investigate and record historical data. ICT is used for drafting and redrafting, although this aspect is underdeveloped. There has been an improvement in this subject due to the good use being made of the ICT suite. SEN pupils are fully integrated into ICT lessons.
13. Standards of attainment in music for pupils aged 5 to 7 are below what is expected nationally and for pupils aged 11 it is well below national expectations. Pupils have a limited number of musical skills. In Year 2 pupils were able to compose their own music realising that a symbol represented a sound made by an instrument. Pupils used simple percussive instruments to perform their compositions, but found difficulty in maintaining a steady beat. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils carried out the same tasks as the Year 2 class, but with less success. Pupils had great difficulty with their co-ordination and were unable to keep the beat steady. Pupils were not able to appraise their composition or refine it.
14. Overall standards at the end of both key stages in physical education are satisfactory. By the age of 11 over fifty percent of the pupils can swim 25 metres. At both key stages strategies for ball skills and invasion games are developed. Pupils learn to co-ordinate movement. They can reflect each other's movement as well as move in parallel. Strategies and positional play in team games need further development to raise attainment.
15. In religious education attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to link stories they are told or read with everyday issues. In Year 2, pupils are aware of the well-known Bible stories such as the 'Prodigal Son'. Pupils in Year 2 are able to talk about unfairness and forgiveness. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the importance of the Sikh temple as a place of worship. In Year 5, pupils consider such things as fasting and why certain religions fast. Drama is used to good effect to encourage pupils to talk about their emotions.

16. Attainment for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The majority of these pupils enter school being able to speak English. They are coping well in school with peers and with their learning. However, at the time of the inspection no pupil had been tested for fluency of English.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

17. Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. Pupils are keen to learn, willingly answer questions in lessons and show pride in their work. School activities such as the breakfast club and sports are well supported.
18. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall and this helps to create an orderly community. The great majority of pupils display good behaviour both in lessons and at breaks. Most pupils are both good natured and friendly and smile readily. Pupils display courtesy, for example, by holding doors open for visitors. The majority move around the school in an orderly manner. Pupils show respect for property and for each other. There is virtually no litter dropped within the school or its immediate surroundings.
19. However, in some lessons observed a small number of pupils displayed poor self-discipline by, for example, pushing other pupils' chairs. This was most evident in lessons where management of poor behaviour was not progressively applied.
20. There were no pupils permanently excluded from school during the past two years neither were there were fixed term exclusions during this same period. This is a much better exclusion record than most schools of a similar size nationally. There is no evidence of bullying, sexism or racial behaviour.
21. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy a wide range of responsibilities such as librarians, prefects or form captains. Pupils have respect for the roles of head boy and head girl. They perceive the school council as a means of collaborating effectively with the school. Year 6 pupils express a wish for more multicultural contacts and visitors and are conscious of the needs of others both within and outside the school community. The great majority of pupils show respect for their teachers and support staff. However, a small number of pupils who behave badly in lessons are less understanding of the impact of their actions on the learning of other pupils.
22. Attendance is well below the national average and is a significant weakness. There is no unauthorised absence.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

23. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Fifty-one percent of the teaching was satisfactory. Thirty-five percent of the teaching was good and twelve percent of the teaching was very good. Only two percent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. This is an improvement on the last inspection where twenty percent of the lessons were unsatisfactory. There has been an improvement in the number of lessons in which the teaching is good or better. In the last report 25 percent of the lessons were good or very good, whereas in this inspection there were 47 percent of the lessons which were judged to be good or very good.

24. Within the foundation stage (nursery and reception) teaching is good or very good. The members of staff under the new co-ordinator work well as a team. They know and understand the early learning goals. The curriculum is planned so that early learning goals can be reached. In the last inspection report it stated that there was insufficient time allowed to enable adults to work with the children in order to promote learning. This is no longer an issue as the teaching is now planned so that there is more classroom support given to the children; this has a positive effect on the learning and the children are making sound progress.
25. Good assessment procedures, which highlight the steps the children have to take in order to attain the early learning goals, ensure that the planning targets the needs of the children. They are on course to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development by the time they move into Year 1.
26. In the foundation stage teacher makes good use of the National Literacy Strategy. Direct teaching skills are used in reading in the reception classes; children are encouraged through effective questioning to talk about their favourite story and predict the endings to stories. Guided reading is effectively used to teach the conventions of story writing.
27. Lively teaching in the foundation stage maintains a brisk pace and motivates the children ensuring full participation in the lessons thus allowing them to make good progress in mathematics. There is also very good support planned and given to enable children to be involved in the practical aspects of this subject. The teaching develops good mathematical language. The teachers' use of exciting resources motivates the children.
28. Within Years 1 and 2 the percentage of satisfactory and good teaching is the same. Of the twenty lessons observed nine of these were satisfactory and nine were good with two of the lessons being very good. In the lessons that are good or very good, teachers plan work to build on what the pupils can already do and lesson plans give a good overview. Subject knowledge is secure and is used to teach technical terms and a wider knowledge of the subject and vocabulary. Where lessons are good or very good lessons are well prepared. The pace of the lesson is brisk. There is a good match between pupils' needs and the methods used to impart the knowledge, which leads to productive learning. There is good use of questioning that extends knowledge. Learning objectives are appropriate to the tasks set and these objectives are explained very clearly to the pupils. Relationships between pupils and teacher are very good and there is good class management and control.
29. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is overall satisfactory with aspects of good and very good teaching. Of the 53 lessons observed 33 were satisfactory, 14 were good and four were very good. There were only two unsatisfactory lessons observed. The teachers of pupils aged 7 to 11 have a satisfactory knowledge of most areas of the curriculum. They are less confident to teach music and art and design. In music teachers have not established the use of technical language. The use of ICT is not yet part of the music lesson as there are no audio recordings of performances, or pupils' composition work. The computer software program is little used. Teachers do not have sufficient knowledge to measure pupils' skills. The commercial scheme, purchased by the school, which could support teachers with limited musical knowledge is not being used. Where art and design is concerned the teachers lack skills to instruct their pupils in the correct use of tools and the different areas of art

that are required to be taught by the National Curriculum. Teachers' assessment is currently unsatisfactory because of the lack of skills and understanding. The planning in the other subjects of the National Curriculum is satisfactory and sometimes good. In science good use of investigation techniques was observed along with good scientific language. Teachers' enthusiasm for subjects helped to motivate pupils. In one lesson a task was set for those who finished early and this ensured that the pupils did not waste any time. In a good lesson explanations and intervention helped pupils to stay on task. In the lessons that were unsatisfactory, knowledge and skills were not challenged. The work did not match the pupils' prior ability.

30. Overall the teaching of English is satisfactory. It is good for pupils aged 5 to 7 with some very good teaching occurring in a Year 1 class. In the 7 to 11 age range, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some very good teaching in a Year 6 English group. The National Literacy Strategy is used for planning and the three part lesson structure is used effectively in other subjects. The structure works well where teachers are very clear about what the pupils are to learn. This involves clear explanations, providing accurate examples for the pupils to follow and managing their behaviour well so that they all remain on task. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred when behaviour strategies were ineffective so that poor behaviour adversely affected the progress of the majority of pupils.
31. In mathematics the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. At both key stages there is good teaching and in Key Stage 2 there is very good teaching. In all lessons objectives are shared with pupils and, on occasions, referred to at the end of the lesson to check whether they have been met. This practice provides a very clear focus for the pupils. In the very good lessons teachers' planning is detailed and well structured. Work is well structured to build on what pupils already know. Demonstration and questioning encourage pupils to reason. The questioning is targeted to match pupils' differing ability. The numeracy strategy is well used throughout the school and pupils' mathematical knowledge and numeracy skills are used in other subjects of the curriculum such as science.
32. The teaching of SEN pupils is good. The support staff are used well on the whole and help to keep the pupils on task. The class teachers' planning, especially for literacy and numeracy, is detailed and includes suitable tasks. Teachers plan tasks closely with the trained assistants from the special educational support service and with classroom assistants. This enables all support assistants to help pupils achieve appropriately. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils' individual educational plans and incorporate these targets into their work.

#### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

33. The school provides a broad and balanced provision for the subjects of the National Curriculum but in religious education insufficient time is allowed in years 1,2 and 3. The curriculum for the Under 5s meets requirements. Since the last inspection the curriculum has maintained an appropriate balance despite increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Current provision in art and music, however, is unsatisfactory. In art, the coordinator is new and has inherited problems but he has good expertise that will allow the scheme of work and assessment procedures to develop. In music there is a good range of visiting instrumental teachers, for whom the pupils pay, but extra curricular activities are lacking. There is no choir or instrumental ensemble.

The scheme of work is not in place to a satisfactory level and teachers lack the musical skills needed to deliver the curriculum.

34. All subjects now have coordinators to plan and manage areas of the curriculum. The planning and staff training for literacy and numeracy have ensured the effective implementation of these strategies. Personal, social and health education is promoted throughout the school. Sex education and important aspects of the physical development of young people are fully covered. Matters relating to drugs awareness are dealt with on a regular basis by visits from outside agencies and through the curriculum where appropriate. Statutory requirements are met for all subjects.
35. The school is effective in fostering pupils' intellectual and physical development, preparing them for post-primary education. Very good links have been established with the local high school, which ensure a smooth transition between stages.
36. Strategies to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to the planned curriculum are securely in place. SEN pupils are fully integrated and make valuable contributions to the life of the school. A praise and reward system is well used to recognize good progress and pupils receive badges and certificates from the head teacher in weekly assemblies.
37. There is a range of extra-curricular activities, which enhance pupils' attainment, especially in physical education. Sports activities include netball and football competitions in leagues of cluster schools.
38. The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and sound for spiritual and cultural development. Overall provision is satisfactory. The school provides a good ethos, in which pupils are seen as unique and positively valued. It fulfils all requirements for a daily act of worship focusing on a Christian foundation, but with the exception of religious education and art, there are few planned opportunities for spiritual development in other curriculum areas. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on world affairs. Through considering people in need the pupils learn to care for others and to appreciate the good things in their own lives. Where the curriculum provides for spiritual development the provision is satisfactory.
39. A strong sense of morality underpins the aims and ethos of the school, and pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils are aware of the responsibility they have for their own actions, and show a concern for the well being of others. Rules for behaviour in school are clearly displayed in each classroom. Older pupils take responsibility for simple tasks in assembly, ringing lesson bells, milk delivery etc.
40. Pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school. All members of staff provide good role models. Pupils recognize the expectation made of them in terms of behaviour and respond in a positive manner. Their understanding of good citizenship is well developed by fundraising activities for charities, both local and national. In many subjects pupils have the opportunity to work collaboratively and develop good inter-personal skills, for example in ICT working together in the computer suite. Sporting activities also promote a good understanding of fair play and sportsmanship.
41. The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to listen to poets, musicians and authors of children's books. Visitors to the school have

included a steel band. The majority of pupils share a common cultural background. They are taught to explore other cultures through history, geography and religious education. Resources are well used to show other traditions, such as a greetings card from America with best wishes for thanksgiving at harvest time. Provision for multi-cultural development is satisfactory. Speakers from other cultures and religions visit the school. Lesson plans include celebrating Eid by making a card, knowing what a Gurdwara means to a Sikh and designing its interior. Assemblies make a contribution to multi-cultural awareness.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

42. The school takes good care of its pupils. Teachers know the pupils well and overall pastoral care is an essential part of the school's ethos. Teachers and support staff provide good role models. Personal and social development is strongly supported through lessons such as science, physical education and religious education. In personal, social and health education (PSHE ) lesson targets are set for each pupil's personal development. The individual needs of all pupils are met and support for SEN pupils is good. Pupils with hearing impairment are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
43. Child protection procedures comply with both locally agreed guidelines and statutory requirements.
44. Provision for health and safety is good. Policies are secure and both day-to-day supervision and emergency procedures are well planned. Accident, health and safety and risk assessment records are meticulously maintained. There is appropriate provision for first aid, including four trained members of staff.
45. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good. Attendance records are regularly scrutinised and analysed and class registers are rigorously maintained. Parents are contacted after the first day of unexplained absence and they receive half- termly reports of absence levels. The educational welfare service co-operates closely in cases of persistent absences from school. However, there are restraints on the time available for home visits by the educational welfare officer. Improving attendance levels is part of the performance targets for both the head teacher and deputy head teacher. Good attendance is encouraged through lessons such as personal, social and health education and a merit system. Wall displays in corridors show class attendance levels and there are both individual and class rewards for good attendance.
46. The school has worked hard to improve behaviour and the overall provision is good for maintaining this. Many staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are trained in the management of poor behaviour. There have been no pupils excluded from school in the past two years and the great majority of pupils behave well.

47. The school's system of recognition and rewards for effort and achievement, together with sanctions which can be imposed, are understood and respected by almost all pupils. Achievements are regularly celebrated in assemblies. The benefits of good behaviour are regularly taught through lessons such as PSHE. Both teacher and pupils agree classroom rules before they are clearly displayed.
48. Incidents of bullying, though few, are dealt with swiftly and in line with the anti-bullying policy. However, a small number of pupils misbehave in lessons and require either earlier or different intervention strategies such as learning mentors.
49. Since the last inspection an assessment policy has been developed but it is inconsistently applied across the curriculum. Assessment procedures are well established in the core subjects but less so in others. The curriculum manager has a timetable of assessment tests, which are subsequently analysed and used to set targets and to track pupils' learning and achievement in English and mathematics. The information is also used to form ability groups and aid teachers' planning. Pupils' personal targets are printed on the cover of their exercise books to remind them of their progress. Curriculum targets for core subjects are also determined from the close examination of formal tests. In non core subjects the quality of assessment recording is less secure. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress across the school are unsatisfactory. In many areas only a tick list of completed tasks is available. There are also inconsistencies in the marking of the pupils' work with few diagnostic comments offered for guidance. Formal and informal monitoring and support of academic progress are satisfactory.
50. Teachers work collaboratively with pupils, parents and, where appropriate, outside support agencies such as the educational psychologist or the educational welfare services. A register is being set up to identify gifted and talented pupils. Targets are set for individual pupils and identified groups of pupils have targeted support. There is regular monitoring and evaluation of results. Individual education plans and support and guidance for SEN pupils are good. Annual reports to parents detail pupils' academic, personal and social progress together with attendance records and indicate where assistance is needed. All pupils have reading records in their books. However, the provision and marking of homework are inconsistent.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

51. Parents' views of the school are generally positive. They perceive it as a good school, which is steadily improving. They consider that their children like school and are making good progress; behaviour is much improved and it is now good; teaching is good with high expectations of pupils. They also believe the school to be caring, approachable about concerns, well led and managed and helpful to pupils to become mature and responsible. Parents are less positive about homework provision, information about pupils' progress, opportunities for collaboration with parents and the range of activities outside lessons.
52. Inspectors agree that homework provision and marking are inconsistent. The school is aware of this concern and seeks to address it. Inspectors find the provision for extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory and that the school intends to extend this range where opportunities arise. Inspectors did not agree with the other concerns. Parents are pleased with the recent improvements to the appearance of the school and with the work that is in progress. However, they find the playgrounds uninspiring.

The school governors are aware of their poor condition and are considering how to improve them.

53. The school places a high priority on involving parents fully in the life of the school and there is a detailed parental involvement policy. The quality of information is good overall. This includes regular newsletters, notices displayed at prominent places inside school, information sheets about games and physical education days, musical instruments days and pupils' targets. There is an induction day for parents whose children are due to start reception classes. Parents are advised about pupils' progress through regular parents' evenings, informal discussions at meetings such as coffee afternoons, end of year reports and when concerns arise. Parents have ready access to class teachers and the head teacher.
54. Parents are invited to assemblies at regular times throughout the year. These are often 'standing room only' events and the recent Harvest Festival for the infants was attended by nearly 100 parents. There is a dedicated parents' room and notice board and parents may use a mobile classroom for courses. There are regular classes for parents such as computing, parents as educators, or family matters, where attendance is variable.
55. However, attendance at the governors' annual report meeting for parents is poor and despite the school trying various times in the day no parents attended the meeting in 2000. A considerable number of parents fail to attend meetings to discuss their child's special educational needs. Where this occurs the school sends parents a letter advising them what has been decided about their child's targets or educational provision.
56. Links with the local churches are strong. The curate and vicar of St. Stephen's church are both school governors and they also take assemblies at school. A local pianist accompanies the children's singing three days a week. The school supports various charities such as a pony sanctuary. Another local primary school exchanges visits. Links with industry are limited due to the location of the school. A builders' merchant offered to supply free materials but unfortunately the school was unable to take advantage of the offer.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

57. The head teacher's leadership and management of the school are good. She is well supported by the senior management team. This is in line with the report of the last inspection. The head teacher has the ability to move the school forward. A good example of this is the improvement in standards since the previous inspection. The work of the senior management team is well developed and their extensive discussions are formalised in the school development plan. Subject co-ordinators contribute through action plans and by submitting reports to the governing body. The school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.
58. The governing body is more effective than was the case at the last inspection when it was noted that the governors had yet to play an active part in development planning. For example, in fulfilling its responsibilities, it is now satisfactory with some good features. It has a well informed and able chair and good leadership of the key financial sub committee. In the last year, many new governors have been appointed but two vacancies for parent governors remain to be filled. Most new governors have still to undertake training. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities but need more detailed information about expenditure on specific grants. The governors' role

in shaping the direction of the school is satisfactory. The chair meets the senior management team to discuss the priorities which will be addressed in the school development plan. Individual governors have link roles and are well informed about developments in literacy and the SEN provision. The curriculum sub committee receives written or verbal reports from all subject co-ordinators. This leads to a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

59. The head teacher and members of the senior management team monitor teaching and planning and scrutinise samples of pupils' work. Formal written feedback is given. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Arrangements for performance management are securely in place and are good. The school development plan clearly documents current priorities and identifies many of the issues raised during the inspection. The school links its budget well to the development plan and co-ordinators are given control of funds for their subjects.
60. Financial planning is satisfactory. The school development plan focuses priorities and budgets are allocated on the basis of identified need. Issues identified in the auditor's report have been addressed. Some miscoding of items means that information about the budgetary position lacks precision. When making large purchases the school applies the principles of best value well by obtaining a number of tenders. These have not yet been monitored to find out their impact on standards. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology to monitor attendance and to maintain financial and pupil records. Specific grants are used effectively for the designated purpose. For example, provision for SEN pupils is good. Falling rolls is a concern, which has begun to have the effect of reducing the school's budget. Individual governors and the senior management team understand the implications of this and have taken steps to anticipate its effects. Formal planning for the longer term has not been undertaken.
61. The number and qualifications of the teaching and support staff enable the school to provide an effective team to deliver the curriculum. Staff work together well and support staff have been involved in training for the national literacy strategy. There are good arrangements for the induction of teachers new to the school.
62. The accommodation is satisfactory for all subjects and is much improved. The imminent completion of security fencing should reduce the amount the school has to pay for vandalism. Teaching resources are satisfactory overall. They are good in English, mathematics, design and technology and ICT. Resources are poor in music and satisfactory in all other curriculum areas. When all factors are taken into account the school gives satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to improve pupils' attainment and achievement, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Raise attainment in Key Stages 1 and 2:

In English by:

- Improving writing techniques e.g. through the use of more adventurous vocabulary
- Improving reading skills for the majority of pupils
- Ensuring consistent approach to letter formation and writing style across the school

(Paras 5, 6, 76 and 77)

In art and design by:

- Increasing the skills of teachers so that they can instruct their pupils in the correct use of tools and all the facets of art and design as required by the National Curriculum
- Establishing a portfolio of pupils' moderated work in order to assist in better assessment of pupils' work.
- Enabling the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning within the class room

(Paras 9, 28, 96, 97, 98 and 100)

In music by:

- Ensuring that teachers use and understand fully the technical language used in music
- Establishing audio recordings of performances and pupils' composition
- Either using the commercial scheme or devising a school scheme to support the non-specialists
- Ensuring that skills are built upon throughout the key stages
- Ensuring that teachers are proficient and confident enough in the subject to be able to make assessments

(Paras 13, 28, 130, 131, 132 and 135)

(2) Continue to focus on raising attendance to the national level by

- Continuing to monitor absenteeism
- Ensuring that the Educational Welfare Officer efficiently investigates persistent 'non-attenders'

(Paras 21 and 45)

(3) Improve the quality of assessment in the foundation subjects by

- Devising a system that will be a useful tool to the teachers and not just a checklist.

(Paras 41, 100, 127, 135 and 143)

(4) Ensure that lessons include tasks which challenge pupils of all abilities

(Paras 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 77, 104, 129, 131 and 132)

*In addition to the main key issues, the governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:*

Refine behaviour management to focus on the small number of disruptive pupils  
(Paras 18, 29 and 48)

Continue to build upon the recent progress made in the general curriculum  
(Paras 6 and 23)

Promote greater community involvement in the school  
(Paras 55 and 56)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	70

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	30	43	2	0	0
Percentage	0	12	35	51	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	35	326
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	170

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	101

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	91.5
National comparative data	94.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	26	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	24
	Girls	15	14	17
	Total	35	33	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (77)	75 (63)	93 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	23
	Girls	15	14	16
	Total	36	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (66)	82 (77)	89 (76)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	26	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	13	24
	Girls	22	13	28
	Total	41	26	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (80)	47 (59)	95 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	21	26
	Girls	21	17	29
	Total	42	38	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (57)	69 (59)	100 (57)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	10
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	323
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Yr– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.9
Average class size	24.9

#### **Education support staff: YR- Y6**

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	291

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	17.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	880814
Total expenditure	881969
Expenditure per pupil	2205
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	-1155

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	361
Number of questionnaires returned	124

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	40	6	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	4	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	45	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	37	17	3	6
The teaching is good.	52	40	5	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	40	15	3	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	27	4	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	29	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	41	40	13	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	47	42	4	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	38	16	3	10

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

64. The last inspection reported inconsistent progress in the nursery. The time allowed for adults to work with the children was insufficient to promote learning. More classroom support is now in place so that findings in this inspection show children in the nursery and in reception making sound progress. Good teaching overall is having a positive impact on learning. The teachers and the nursery nurses know and understand the early learning goals. They plan the curriculum to attain them. The classroom support assistants work closely with the teachers and nursery nurses. Very good leadership from the co-ordinator ensures a very good team spirit in the foundation stage.
65. Assessment on early entry shows that most pupils are below average. They begin school with poor speaking and listening skills. Records of progress in the six areas of learning are kept, highlighting the steps the children have taken towards the early learning goals in the nursery. Children in reception take the Liverpool baseline assessment in language and mathematics. Through good teaching, planning and organisation, the children improve so that they are on course to reach the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development by the time they move into Year 1.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

66. The teachers plan challenging, but achievable activities, so that the children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. In the nursery, the teacher makes effective use of a happy/sad soft toy to encourage the children to talk about feelings. The children in the reception class reflected on the Harvest Festival. They know that people celebrate and give thanks to God for a good harvest. The members of staff, in the foundation stage, act as models in a range of positive behaviour, always treating each other with courtesy and respect. They listen attentively to what the children have to say. This builds confidence in the children so that they are able to try new activities. They can report on what they have done, reaching the step of speaking in a familiar group. In the nursery, the children are encouraged to sit quietly and to listen when appropriate. Gentle reminders maintain the children's attention. Everyday routines, such as 'snack times', encourage a sense of belonging and sharing. The children learn to take turns and say thank you. They form good relationships and are pleased to be together and supportive of each other. Moving on, they become independent in selecting, using and tidying away activities. Most children in the foundation stage manage their own personal hygiene and are learning to dress and undress themselves. They are on course to reach the early learning goals.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

67. The quality of teaching is good and often very good, in communication, language and literacy. The children make good progress in listening and satisfactory progress in speaking. They enjoy listening to stories and join in the refrains. Effective questioning enables the children to talk about their favourite story. The children in the

nursery can say and sing nursery rhymes. Older children in reception know and retell traditional stories, such as Jack and the Beanstalk. Using picture cards of the 'Goldilocks' story, they can tell the story in correct sequence and then check the order in the Big Book.

68. Teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy by reading stories together. The children in the nursery can follow the pattern of the story and predict the endings. Direct teaching skills are used in reading in the reception classes. In the Big Book, 'Goldilocks' words were covered up with 'post its'. The children were encouraged to guess the missing words by using the sense of the story and then checking their answers. Children learn the initial sounds of the letters. They are not able to hear and say the middle and final sounds of words. Flash cards are used, with a quick pace, by the teachers, to build up a sight vocabulary.
69. In the nursery, children are encouraged to write using a variety of jotters, papers, brushes and markers. Emergent writing is seen in the homemade storybooks. The children draw their way through the story and make marks under the teacher's writing. In reception, the children can hold a pencil correctly and they are taught the correct formation of letters. They can make words using the magnetic letters. Guided writing is effectively used to teach the children the conventions of story writing. They know that a story has a beginning, middle and an end. Many can copy the stories they have written with the teacher but they are not yet at the stage of writing in sentences or using punctuation. They are not on course to reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy.

### **Mathematical development**

70. Good teaching, together with effective planning and organisation, enables the children to make good progress in mathematics. In the nursery, they can count everyday objects to five. Lively teaching keeps a good pace so that the children are keen to join in the counting games. Numeracy is developed through the activities. In the sand three children build three castles. With very good support from the nursery nurse, they learn to build sets of three: three buckets, three spades. In collage, the children give their faces two eyes, one nose and one mouth. Good development of mathematical language is used in threading beads. They understand one more and 'put a green one next'. In the water they fill and empty different sizes of equipment. Classroom rules teach them 'four at the painting and two at the play dough'. In reception, the children can recognise and name numbers from one to nine. Teachers motivate the children by using exciting resources. An attractive toy box was filled with beanie toys. After a quick glance the children estimated how many toys there were in the box. They checked their answers by pegging out and counting the toys. The children can put numbers into order, name missing numbers and count on from a given number. They use mathematical language to describe more/less, greater/smaller, heavier/lighter. The children are able to develop mathematical ideas. They can think about size when fitting ten shapes into a given space. In mathematics they are on course to reach the early learning goals.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

71. The nursery is organised so that work in knowledge and understanding is linked to the other areas of learning. Teachers have a good overview of all the working groups and they encourage good development of subject specific language. There is very good use of resources and every opportunity is utilised to enhance the children's

knowledge and understanding of the world. In 'snack time' the children investigate the fruit. Children teach each other by passing round the fruit and describing the touch and the smell. Words such as 'smooth' 'rough' 'bumpy' 'sweet' 'strong' show good development of vocabulary. They know that a banana comes from a tree because it has a stalk. Through the 'Autumn' display they learn about living things: that squirrels collect nuts for winter. They use magnifying glasses to see the changing colours of the leaves, and mirrors to study the features of their faces. Effective questioning enables the children to notice similarities and differences. Children in the reception classes know why things happen. In making porridge they found out that adding sugar to the oats changed the taste. They knew that heat changed the appearance and the consistency. Aware of safety issues, they know to keep away from the microwave and to leave the porridge to cool. They can record their work by drawing the ingredients and making a plan of the method. Design and technology skills are used in selecting tools and materials to make collages and models. Opportunities to develop technical skills are provided in the listening centres and in the computer area. The children use the 'dress teddy' program to print pictures of teddy caring for himself. They can read the captions: 'I like his clothes. He is all dressed up now'. The children can talk about their families and understand that 'nan' is older than mum and dad. They know where they live and how they come to school. In taking care of themselves and their school they learn about the environment. Sound progress is seen in this area of work and the children are on course to reach the early learning goals.

### **Physical development**

72. Physical development through outdoor play is unsatisfactory. All the children in the foundation stage use the outdoor play equipment at playtimes. There are no opportunities to develop gross motor skills. Group work in outdoor play is not planned in the timetable. There are effective links with parents, who have raised money for the equipment, which includes a climbing frame fixed on a safe surface of bark, large toys and small games equipment. They play safely but skills in travelling around, under, over and through are not developed. There is a lack of fixed high and low equipment to teach balancing, sliding and crawling. The school is aware of this need and has plans to improve outdoor play. Children work satisfactorily in the hall. They can jump, hop and move in different directions, with confidence and in safety. The children change for physical education and work in bare feet. They are aware of changes in the body through exercise. The children in the foundation stage are developing fine motor skills. They can handle tools such as scissors and knives for cutting up fruit, rollers and cutters in playing with the dough and brushes and pencils in painting and drawing. Teachers effectively plan small world equipment and 'Duplo' to improve skills in construction. At the present time the children are not reaching the early learning goals in physical development.

### **Creative development**

73. In this area of learning the children make sound progress. Quality teaching has led to good progress in painting, drawing and collage. In art, the children explore colour, pattern and shape through the challenging materials provided. The children in the nursery made a scarecrow in collage as part of their work for the Harvest Festival. In assembly, they performed before an audience, singing and acting 'a dingle dangle scarecrow'. The children sing tunefully with good rhythm and dynamics. In the reception classes good imaginative role play is seen in the 'Three Bears Cottage'. The nursery nurse in one class filmed the children performing and assessed the

language development. In the foundation stage, the children respond to things they see, hear, touch and smell. They are on course to reach the early learning goals.

## ENGLISH

74. Standards in national tests for seven year olds were below average in 2000. Pupils are better at listening and reading than they are in speaking and writing. Seven year olds' results were above those achieved in schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Standards in national tests for eleven year olds were below average in 2000. They were well above those achieved in similar schools. Over the period from 1998-2000, pupils' results have improved broadly in line with the national trend. This represents satisfactory progress for all pupils including those with special educational needs. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
75. Throughout the school pupils listen well especially in whole class sessions at the beginning of literacy lessons. This is in line with the report of the last inspection. Speaking skills are below average. Most pupils speak confidently but do not use the formal vocabulary, which is appropriate for the context of the lesson. Teachers stress the key vocabulary for the lesson but do not always ensure that pupils use it in their response. An example is in a class of six to seven year olds who discuss a recipe as a form of instruction. A pupil struggles to express herself even though she understands what she is talking about.
76. While reading skills are below average, some higher attaining pupils achieve standards well up to national average levels or above. In a class of ten to eleven year olds, a higher attaining pupil reads confidently from a challenging text. He discusses the wide range of books he reads, which includes fiction, non-fiction and poetry. He understands the library classification system and, at home, uses the computer to search for information. Pupils of average ability for the class read accurately and independently but from a narrower range of books. Their attitudes to reading are quite good and they have access to books outside school. One pupil does not know how to locate information in a library. Less capable readers in all classes are often still working on very basic texts for their age.
77. Standards are weaker in writing than in reading. The school has introduced a new handwriting policy, which addresses comments made in the last inspection report. This is beginning to have some effect but there are still many pupils whose letter formation is poor and who do not hold a pen or pencil correctly. Pupils have targets for writing in their books but only higher attaining pupils are working at levels appropriate for their age. An example is a higher attaining ten to eleven year old pupil who writes in paragraphs. The sentence structure is sound and subordinate clauses are used. Spelling is usually accurate but there is little use of adventurous vocabulary. In a class of six to seven year olds, a higher attaining pupil writes in sentences with simple connectives and spells common words correctly. There are some good examples of writing in subjects other than English. In a class of eight to nine year olds a pupil writes well about Henry VIII getting rid of Anne Boleyn and seeking a new wife. Too often tasks in other subjects do not challenge pupils to think and make their own notes. The contribution of computers to writing is under developed. SEN pupils make satisfactory progress and the use of teaching sets for older pupils has a good effect on learning.

78. Teaching is good for five to seven year old pupils and satisfactory for pupils aged seven to eleven. The good and very good teaching is characterised by good management of pupils, good subject knowledge, a brisk pace and good questions which extend pupils' learning. In a class of six to seven year olds, pupils respond to this by exploring the strategies they are using as they interpret a map in the Big Book. Where the lesson is satisfactory rather than good, the structure of the National Literacy Strategy promotes satisfactory learning but pupils' concentration starts to waver in group sessions and this affects the amount of work done. In the single instance of unsatisfactory teaching, unsatisfactory behaviour inhibits learning. Pupils' work is marked and in the best examples teachers make constructive comments which help pupils to achieve learning objectives.
79. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is aware of areas for development and has organised appropriate initiatives including 'Grammar for Writing'. The results of national tests are analysed and a report is made to the governing body. The governor responsible for literacy is informed and supportive. A suitable range of assessment procedures is in place. Teachers receive written feedback on their planning and teaching and when their pupils' work is sampled. The curriculum is enriched by visits from a poet and from theatre companies. There are good resources and a central library has been established with help from the local library service.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. At the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving at the expected level 2, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, was close to the national average when compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools the results were well above average. Similarly, the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level 3 was also above the national average performance of schools in similar contexts. This is an improvement on standards at the last inspection. The trend over the last four years has risen steadily and in 2001 the school exceeded its target.
81. Attainment during the inspection is judged to be above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Both in lessons observed and in the work seen, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the subject because of teaching which is good overall. The quality of pupils' recorded work in Year 2 is of a satisfactory standard. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils cover all strands of the curriculum and are developing their mathematical vocabulary well. Strategies for mental calculations are pursued with pupils who explain to others and compare. "I put the biggest number in my head and count on". Other strategies involve doubling or bonds to 10. Simple calculations are carried out satisfactorily and pupils are able to add and subtract single figures to tens and units and count on and back in tens. Pupils in Year 2 can identify multiples of 2, 5 and 10 and successfully use doubling and adding ten and plus or minus one for operations involving eleven and nine respectively. They count up to 20 objects and beyond and are able to tell the time by half and quarter hours. They study number patterns and sequences and can readily identify odd and even numbers. They name regular two and three dimensional shapes and are familiar with corners and faces. They name and identify regular polygons, pyramids and cuboids. Data handling activities include tallying, simple graphs and the use of Venn diagrams to sort 2D shapes. Work in problem solving and investigations is being developed and there is good use of mathematical language. Clearly, the strength is in number work which is reinforced by a variety of activities, including the use of money in shopping excursions.

82. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, results were well below the national average when compared with all schools and also with schools in similar contexts. This is below the performance recorded at the previous inspection. Standards have varied over the last four years but appear to be recovering from the lowest results of three years ago. In 2001 the school exceeded its targets but no comparative figures are available. The school has analysed results and used the information well.
83. Standards during the inspection at the end of Key Stage 2 show a steady improvement on test results due to the good use made of assessment analysis to inform planning and the organization of classes. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a sound knowledge of multiplication tables and are making satisfactory progress in number. In oral and mental activities they develop strategies for calculations. They can order 4 digit numbers, count on and back in variable amounts through zero. They are familiar with different ways of adding large numbers, including partitioning where they demonstrate understanding of place value. They are able to use multiplication grids successfully and calculate in short multiplication and division using 2 and 3 digit numbers. Most pupils work successfully with vulgar and decimal fractions and understand ratio and proportion. They measure and calculate areas and perimeters of rectangles and triangles and they know the names and properties of 2 and 3 dimensional shapes. Problem solving activities and investigations are under developed but attention is being given to this area and progress is being made. Data handling skills and statistical calculations, such as different kinds of averages, are under developed. Pupils are familiar with the need to represent information in graphs and use coordinates but are not given sufficient opportunities to explore and compare graphical displays.
84. Progress in the lessons observed is satisfactory. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. The progress in the pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, particularly in the development of number skills and the use of key vocabulary. The daily class sessions of mental arithmetic and problem solving activities are effective in helping all pupils to rehearse and apply knowledge. The arrangement of classes according to ability allows differentiation of tasks appropriate to the levels of ability of the pupils and all are given opportunities to extend their abilities. SEN pupils generally make good progress with the support of classroom assistants, and are integrated into the activities of the class as appropriate.
85. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good at Key Stage 1 and from satisfactory to very good at Key Stage 2 with no unsatisfactory lessons observed. All teachers are observing the principles, content and structure of the Numeracy strategy. The better lessons have good pace and teachers support all ability groups with appropriately chosen tasks. There is a strong emphasis on promoting investigatory methods of learning with work set at different levels for pupils of different needs, and as a result pupils generally acquire new knowledge and skills at an appropriate rate and consolidate these by completing relevant examples. Daily lesson plans are of a good standard and effective use is made of plenary sessions to review progress and reinforce learning objectives.

86. Pupils' attitudes are good. They work well individually and are eager to answer questions in oral and mental sessions. Pupils enjoy using their white boards or number fans to display their answers in oral and mental activities and enthusiastically erase previous answers in eager anticipation of the next question. When called upon, they work collaboratively and take turns. They are polite in their behaviour with adults and take responsibility for handing out books and equipment when asked.
87. The subject is well managed by an efficient coordinator who has given considerable time to incorporating the numeracy strategy and planning appropriate activities for the age groups in the school. Monitoring the teaching of lessons in numeracy has been successful in giving confidence to members of staff. Assessments are analysed in detail and targets set. Lesson planning for the parallel groups takes place weekly. Resources are satisfactory but information technology is not used to enhance learning in mathematics. The coordinator is aware of this need and in-service training in the use of ICT in numeracy is planned for the spring term.

## **SCIENCE**

88. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, teachers' assessments show that the proportion of children reaching the expected levels was below the national average, but when compared with similar schools the results were above average. There were no pupils assessed as working at the higher Level 3 and when compared with similar schools these results are below average. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in science, the percentage reaching Level 4 or above was above the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well above average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was close to the national average and was above average when compared with similar schools. These results show that the expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 are sufficiently challenging for the pupils. There is no significant variation in attainment between girls and boys. Pupils on the special needs register achieve standards that are appropriate. There has been an upward trend in results over time since 1996, except for 1998 when there was a dip, but the science results are now above the national average at Key Stage 2 and this is a good improvement since the last inspection.
89. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have looked at plants and animals in the local environment, they have undertaken work on electricity and circuits and understand that flowering plants produce seeds and need warmth and water to germinate. Scrutiny of last year's books at Key Stage 1 shows good coverage of the science curriculum. Currently pupils are learning about growth and change through the lifecycles of the frog and the butterfly and the younger pupils are learning about healthy eating. Pupils record their ideas in different ways, for example in their books or collectively in collages. They use the computer to check the appropriateness of their choice of food or to further their knowledge about growth and change. There is evidence that pupils are learning through investigating. The less able pupils are well supported and are helped to achieve their tasks. Higher attainers are encouraged to work independently and produce their own written work.
90. Previous work seen at Key Stage 2 shows a good coverage of most programmes of study. There is good development of scientific vocabulary used in context. The majority of pupils show a good understanding of the topics they cover. Younger pupils learn how to conduct a fair test through investigating the stretch of different tights, which encouraged them to develop their ideas and challenged them to think about changes in materials. Pupils were also learning about separating mixtures of

materials through practical investigation. They used their planning sheets and discussed their ideas with each other working well at the task. Older pupils were learning about evaporation and their work was well planned and thoroughly discussed. Through individually planning their work, pupils were able to understand how a variable was used in scientific investigation. The oldest pupils were learning about saturation. They could use scientific language confidently and link this with mathematics and data collection, recording their results in a written form and then as a bar graph which they could discuss with others giving reasons for their results. They used the computer program with confidence. They were clear about how to undertake a fair test and could explain the necessity of accuracy and the repeating of experiments to check results. Pupils could also explain how their predictions were not always fulfilled.

91. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. When learning is good pupils have opportunities to discuss, enjoy and persist in the practical tasks given. Overall the pupils' learning is good at Key Stage 2 because knowledge and concepts are developed alongside investigative skills. On occasions the planning for investigations and discussion work was long. Through carefully structured planning sheets pupils are able to collaborate and produce a plan for an investigation. Good learning took place when pupils recognised patterns in data, linking mathematics with science and when pupils could give reasons in scientific language for the changes that occurred during the investigation.
92. Pupils' attitudes are at least satisfactory and sometimes good at Key Stage 1 and are good overall at Key Stage 2. In most lessons pupils showed an interest in what they were doing. In Key Stage 1, pupils were able to put into the correct order the stages of development of the frog and the butterfly, which stimulated discussion within the groups. They persisted with their tasks well. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils worked well together to find out about the stretchiness of tights and were very interested in the investigation. Older pupils showed competence when investigating saturation and gases and were confident in making predictions and in discussing their results.
93. The quality of teaching in science during the week of inspection was satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Most teachers are confident in their own scientific knowledge and understand the National Curriculum programmes of study. Planning for lessons is satisfactory and takes into account the higher attainers, the average and those with special needs. Objectives are shared with the pupils who are clear about the focus of the lesson. Practical investigations have a high profile and care is taken to ensure that pupils understand what they are doing. Effective questioning and discussion during the plenary session give teachers the opportunity to monitor pupils' level of understanding. Marking is carried out conscientiously and is supportive, but it does not always inform pupils what they should do next in order to improve.
94. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator monitors planning but, as yet, has had no opportunity to evaluate the quality of teaching. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines to give teachers support in the knowledge aspects of the programmes of study. The school has tailored the guidelines well to suit the needs and interests of its own pupils. There is a timetable for monitoring which ensures regular discussion. Assessment procedures are good and there is analysis of the information, which helps teachers to set targets for individuals and groups; this also helps in the planning of lessons. Evaluations of lessons are also undertaken which contributes to the planning of

subsequent lessons. Resources are satisfactory; they are readily available and are well used. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Only one lesson in art and design could be observed during the inspection week because of the way the timetable is structured. Evidence has also been taken from looking at pupils' previous work, sketchbooks, and displays and from talking to teachers and pupils. There has been no improvement since the last report.
96. Attainment in art is below average for Years 1 and 2 and well below average for Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6 pupils have not significantly developed their skills much since the end of Year 2, so that compared with what is expected, their skills are very limited for their age. This is because pupils do not yet build on their basic artistic skills or extend them into using sufficient different media as they move from year to year.
97. Work displayed showed that pupils in Years 1 and 2 had been given different opportunities, such as painting self-portraits and buildings. In addition they had decorated fallen leaves with autumn colours of paint and had rubbed tree bark to produce the trunk of a tree in a display. However, pupils observed working in Year 2 did not yet have the expected level of drawing skills. Pictures on display showed that others had found it difficult to colour and shade using 'lead' or coloured pencils.
98. A display of line drawings of self-portraits in chalk or charcoal, from every year in the school, showed that there is little development of skills between Years 1 and 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have painted pictures such as alien landscapes, or posters about the rain forest. These show pupils' brush-skills and their ability to mix and apply paint have developed very little since they were in Year 2. Reproductions of pictures by famous artists used very basic painting and pencil techniques. The school is aware that apart from collages, the range of artwork, sculptures and textiles in 3D is limited. In addition, very few items of graphic art on computers have been produced, so that pupils are not experiencing the range of opportunities they should have in order to cover the National Curriculum. Although sketchbooks are in use by all the pupils in the school, they are not yet being used sufficiently to experiment with different techniques, colours and textures. SEN pupils make the same progress as others in art and design. The quality of learning by the majority of pupils is therefore unsatisfactory.
99. Pupils' attitudes towards art and design are good and they behave well. They share equipment sensibly and enjoy their lessons.
100. Teaching observed was satisfactory. However, the majority of teachers do not yet have the necessary skills to instruct their pupils in the correct use of tools and all the facets of art and design required by the National Curriculum. In particular, teachers have not acquired sufficient skills in elements of art such as line, tone and texture. The new co-ordinator is aware of the difficulties and there are plans to help teachers through in-service training to gain more skills and confidence. In addition, the current scheme of work is being improved to ensure that pupils will have more opportunities to develop new skills using a variety of media. Pupils' understanding of the work of well-known artists is under developed. There are no portfolios of pupils' work, so moderation does not yet take place to assist with better quality assessment of pupils' work. Assessment is currently unsatisfactory because of the lack of skills and

understanding most teachers have. Although the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, and pupils' work and sketchbooks, there has been no monitoring of teaching in the subject. The proposed art club has not yet begun.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. The only lessons seen during the inspection week took place in Years 5 and 6 because of the way the timetable was arranged. Other evidence was obtained by looking at pupils' books, photographs and examples of previous work and discussions with pupils and teachers. Improvement since the last report is satisfactory.
102. Attainment in design and technology is average at the end of Year 2, but below average by the end of Year 6. This is because pupils in Years 4 to 6 have not followed a programme of work that was built up step by step when they were further down the school. As a result, they do not have all the skills they need to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum at this stage. Improvement since the last report is satisfactory, because the programme of work, based on the QCA scheme, is well established for Years 1 to 3. All pupils understand the process of designing, making and evaluating products, although describing the design process and evaluating products remain the weakest areas for development.
103. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have made products including 'story books' with opening sections such as doors and windows. They have explored the texture of food such as coleslaw, designed vehicles such as fire engines and tanks and have made hand puppets. Their work shows that they have designed and made the articles, but evaluating them has been carried out orally through questioning and discussion with their teachers. Pupils have begun to use design sheets for each product. Learning is satisfactory.
104. Pupils in Year 6 are designing slippers, by measuring their own feet and beginning to make a prototype before using material. The process of designing does not show the different stages and refinement of ideas, and evaluations of their products are not sufficiently detailed. The progress pupils have made has been hampered by insufficient different tasks. Other products made in Years 3 to 5 include 'moving monsters', torches and bread making. Key words have been introduced, but ICT has not been used as required by the National Curriculum. Design sheets have recently been introduced for Years 3 to 6 but pupils are not used to these. Learning is not yet satisfactory.
105. Lower achievers work well practically but their deficiencies in literacy are evident in labels and written evaluations. Pupils in all years who have special educational needs have made the same progress as others in their classes in practical ways.
106. Pupils work well together, sharing equipment and discussing problems with each other. They enjoy their practical work.
107. The quality of teaching throughout the school cannot be assessed because only three lessons were observed, but from those seen, teaching was mostly satisfactory and there was some good teaching. Although different models of slippers were discussed with the class, no disassembling of products was done to help pupils understand the design process. Teachers have gradually become more familiar with the design process so that their skills have improved since the last report. Co-ordination of the subject is strong and has helped to move the subject forward. Although only two

projects per year are made because of time constraints, cross-references to the National Curriculum have ensured that all the programmes of study are covered. The co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work although no observation of lessons has taken place.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

108. Only one geography lesson was seen at Key Stage 1 during the inspection; however, evidence from children's work, from planning documents and discussion with the co-ordinator indicates that standards by the age of seven are appropriate for the age group. Overall progress is satisfactory and in the one lesson seen, pupils could give their reasons for wanting to live either in a city or on an island. Their collage of an island and a city gave a good focus to their discussion. SEN pupils are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Good use has been made of the local area and pupils can differentiate between attractive and unattractive features in the environment. Mapping skills are also introduced well during Key Stage 1 through their study of the local area.
109. Only two lessons were seen in Key Stage 2, both of which were with the older pupils. However work in their books from the previous year was scrutinised and the lessons seen indicate that satisfactory progress is made during Key Stage 2 by most pupils, including those with special needs. By the age of eleven attainment for the majority is in line with that expected for the age group. Pupils have been studying the rainforest and their display and their books and show sound understanding of geographical features as part of their world studies. However, there is considerable use of worksheets, which for some restricts their developing writing skills. Currently the older Key Stage 2 pupils are researching a country of their own choice. The majority of pupils can use reference books for information, temperature and rainfall charts to interpret the climate of their chosen country. Brochures, magazines and library books were available and were well used. Pupils have ready access to the computer, which they use with confidence. The work was planned so pupils of all levels of attainment had ready access to the activity. Pupils develop an appropriate awareness of different places through studying maps of the British Isles and the world.
110. During the year older pupils have an opportunity to undertake a residential visit to Colomendy in North Wales where they carry out fieldwork and are able to develop a greater understanding of landscape features, including physical features of rivers. These practical activities provide good opportunities for pupils to develop geographical thinking. The Key Stage 1 pupils use the local area, and at Key Stage 2 the local village provides opportunities for local study. The oldest pupils go to France, which extends their experiences of other countries and enriches the curriculum.
111. Most pupils are interested in the geography work. They work at a satisfactory pace when tackling individual or group tasks and collaborate well when sharing ideas or resources within a group.
112. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory but good features were seen at both key stages when pupils were interested in what they were doing and responding well in discussion. There was reinforcement of geographical language and good supervision of groups with support staff well briefed and involved. Objectives are shared with the pupils and they are clear about the focus of the lesson. There is a good supportive atmosphere and pupils are encouraged to contribute ideas.

113. Planning is thorough and medium term plans along with the National Curriculum references give good detail of what is to happen. Links with other subjects, including ICT, numeracy, literacy and personal, social and health education are made evident. There are clear assessment objectives identified as part of the planning.
114. There is a new co-ordinator who has collaborated with the previous co-ordinator and the subject is well organised. There has been a humanities audit to ensure the history and geography units are well sequenced across the key stages. The school has used QCA's guidelines and has selected those areas that are most suited to the school. The policy has been updated and the scheme of work shows that all aspects of the curriculum are covered. There is also a good geographical skills policy, which shows progressive development and covers an appropriate range of skills. There is a satisfactory and growing range of resources including videos, CD Roms, and the website is used for some topics. There is assessment using level descriptors. There is monitoring of the planning, but there is no opportunity for the co-ordinator currently to observe teaching across the school. The curriculum meets the National Curriculum requirements.

## **HISTORY**

115. At the time of inspection there were no history lessons seen at Key Stage 1. This is because history and geography are taught in blocks over the year and pupils were currently undertaking geography topics. However, pupils' previous work in their topic books, both long term and medium term planning, and discussions with the co-ordinator, it is evident that pupils cover the curriculum appropriately. Overall the standards achieved are those expected for pupils aged seven. Younger pupils study history and geography together; in the work on the local area, historical aspects feature in their work. They also study famous people and events and ways of travelling. Progress is satisfactory including for those with special educational needs.
116. At Key Stage 2 satisfactory progress continues and by the age of eleven overall standards are those expected for the age group. Pupils are beginning to appreciate the differences between their school and one of the Victorian age. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils were enthusiastic about their work on ancient Egypt and were beginning to undertake successful group research through using the resources provided to make posters about the after life in those times. Other classes were studying the Tudors, through the wives of Henry VIII. They showed secure knowledge by recalling relevant historical facts they had discussed. Writing invitations to a Tudor wedding was undertaken with interest by the pupils. Pupils had the use of a computer program to record historical facts about the wives of Henry VIII and a CD Rom was well used by pupils studying the ancient Egyptians. Displays of Victorian railways, the wives of Henry VIII and archaeology show that the topics are thoroughly covered.
117. Most pupils enjoy history and are ready to respond to questions and to contribute to class discussions. Most can concentrate on their tasks and settle quickly to work. A minority find it difficult to concentrate on their work. They are eager to undertake practical work and work with enthusiasm.

118. No judgment can be made about the teaching at Key Stage 1 but at Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory with some good teaching seen. Good teaching occurred when there was enthusiasm for the topic being studied and the pupils were keen to use the resources and discover information. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the topics they teach. The lessons were clearly planned and showed what different groups of pupils were to achieve. The tasks were suitably matched to groups and individuals. Objectives are shared with the pupils and they are clear about the focus of the lesson. Teachers involved pupils well in most lessons through discussion, but some of the younger pupils had poor speaking skills which made it difficult for them to respond fully.
119. The subject is satisfactorily co-ordinated. Planning is thorough and the co-ordinator has some time to monitor the medium and short term plans across the school, but currently does not have time to observe lessons. The co-ordinator checks for coverage and that the appropriate National Curriculum levels are included. The school is in the process of developing a portfolio of pupils' work to help in leveling across the key stages. There is a monitoring timetable, which gives appropriate time for the subject. The curriculum is based on the QCA's guidelines. These have been adapted to suit the local needs, for example; the slave trade is included because of the local interest. Parents are kept informed through the work pupils take home and through the end of year reports. The curriculum meets the National Curriculum requirements.
120. Good use is made of resources, which are sufficient and in good condition. Victorian photographs of children in school were of interest and promoted discussion. Appropriate use is made of visitors, visits to local museums, the historic city of Chester and Croxteth Park, all of which are connected with history topics and enrich the curriculum. The artefacts club is so popular that it runs several times to include all the pupils that wish to join.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in ICT are good. These findings indicate a significant rise in the level of achievement from those reported in the previous inspection.
122. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good use of the computer to develop keyboard and mouse skills. They use lower and uppercase letters, colour and different fonts and are developing coordination in moving the cursor on the screen. Skills in using the computer are developed through strong links with other curriculum areas. Pupils use a simple art program well to create pictures involving shapes and colour providing early links with mathematics. In geography pupils show good skills in moving and positioning symbols on the screen to illustrate features such as mountains and rivers on an island. Work in control, using the floor turtle, is well established.
123. Standards in Key Stage 2 are satisfactory and indicate progress since the last inspection. The quality of work shows an improvement and a wider range of experiences offered to pupils. Cross-curricular links are used to develop skills in word processing and art programs. Pupils make good use of an object based graphics program to design a bedroom and their classroom. Features of the program refine skills in mouse control, understanding icons and choosing from menus and palettes. Translating from 2D to 3D designs develops concepts of perspective. In links with history, pupils investigate and record details of Henry VIII and his wives using a

questionnaire. Work in word-processing is limited to short pieces of work and the principles of drafting and redrafting longer pieces of work are underdeveloped.

124. Progress in ICT is good because there is now an up-to-date policy and teaching ensures progression and continuity in the development of skills. Planning for the whole school sets out recommended topics for each year and term; the coverage of the subject is enhanced by the good use made of the new computer suite. Individual computer folders of work have yet to be established for recording and preserving pupils' work. SEN pupils are fully integrated into the lessons.
125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall within the range of good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching is good it is based on secure subject knowledge and good lesson planning with the use of effective methods to achieve objectives. Teaching takes place mostly in the new suite with computers linked by network. Teachers have adapted well to the new technology but need to make greater use of the ICT facilities in the classrooms. Further training in using ICT in literacy, numeracy and science is planned for the current academic year.
126. Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is sound. They work well in pairs, sharing ideas and taking turns to operate the computers. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to others' views. The younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the excitement and wonder of the world of technology.
127. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning plans and technical help is available if needed. Assessment procedures need further development to give more accurate information of pupils' attainment and progress. Planning for progression and continuity is good and the profile of ICT amongst teaching staff is well established.
128. Areas for improvement are in the greater use of the classroom-based computers to give more immediate enhancement of the curriculum and in the development of software and equipment to further the work in control technology.

## **MUSIC**

129. The structure of the timetable during the inspection meant that only two music lessons could be observed. In addition, singing was heard in two assemblies, and two lessons by visiting instrumental teachers were visited. No other evidence, either written or on audio or videotapes, was available in the school. Discussions with pupils and teachers in different year groups showed that most did not understand the elements of music, such as pitch, duration, texture or timbre. This means that there has been no improvement since the last report.
130. Attainment in the school is below average for Years 1 and 2, except where teachers have some musical expertise, for instance in playing a musical instrument. For Years 3 to 6 attainment is well below average. As a result, pupils of all ages have a limited number of musical skills and do not meet all the standards required by the National Curriculum.

131. Pupils in Year 2 were observed composing music. They understood that a symbol could represent a sound made by simple percussion instruments. They knew the names of the instruments and could control the sound they made. When playing each other's music, some pupils managed to keep a steady pulse. However, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils carried out the same task and had great difficulty with their co-ordination when trying to perform their very simple pieces. Here they were unable to keep the beats steady. No appraisal or refinement of work occurred.
132. Pupils are given opportunities to sing during 'hymn practices' but vocal techniques are not sufficiently developed. Singing in unison was heard in different assemblies. Younger pupils sang better for their ages than older pupils. Pupils achieve a limited number of musical skills and make unsatisfactory progress as they move from year to year. SEN pupils make the same progress as others in music. Learning about music as required by the National Curriculum is unsatisfactory.
133. Attitudes to music are good, both in class lessons and large assemblies. Pupils are gaining in confidence as they sing to visiting parents at harvest time. They behave well.
134. Insufficient lessons were observed to comment on the quality of teaching throughout the school, but those seen ranged from satisfactory to very good depending on the extent of musical knowledge of the staff. Teaching by instrumental teachers is beginning to establish a good foundation for pupils to learn woodwind, brass and string instruments in small groups. Although pupils pay for instrumental lessons, there is some subsidy from the school. Teaching of recorders to a number of whole classes of pupils is helping to develop their understanding of learning and performing in a group.
135. Teaching of the technical language used in music is not yet established. The use of information technology is not yet used to audiotape performances and compositions and a music software program is little used. This means that there is no evidence of work previously carried out by pupils. As a result, the work of different classes and years cannot be compared, in order to analyse the amount of progress being made by pupils. Written assessment is flawed, because most teachers do not yet have sufficient knowledge to measure the skills of pupils. As far as planning is concerned, the National Curriculum requirements have been matched to a commercial scheme. However, this is not being used thoroughly or effectively, by all teachers, to promote high musical standards and understanding, as pupils move from one year to another. Although the use of one commercial scheme is not the best way to improve music standards, in these circumstances it can be one of many useful tools to assist teachers. Lesson planning is checked regularly, but there has been no observation of teaching.
136. The new co-ordinator is raising the profile of music in the school by inviting different groups, such as a steel band and a dance initiative, to perform in the school. Groups of pupils sing for seniors and at the local supermarket, around Christmas time, but there is no regular choir or instrumental ensemble work in the school.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. Overall standards in physical education at both key stages are satisfactory. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. Approximately 60 percent of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2.
138. The quality of teaching in physical education throughout the school is satisfactory. There is an effective policy in operation with a scheme of work founded on good basic principles of physical education. A published scheme gives guidance in teaching the elements of the curriculum. Lesson planning is based on a curriculum map outlining the long-term plans for the whole school covering all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers share the teaching objectives with their pupils and set clear challenges. The pace is good and the lessons are well structured. Teachers develop pupils' decision-making and independence skills as well as promoting partnerships and group work.
139. In lessons observed ball skills and strategies for invasion games were developed. Pupils change speed and direction smoothly, working individually and in pairs. They learn to coordinate movements reflecting each other or moving in parallel. In team games they need to develop strategies and positional play. They perform with confidence before their peers who evaluate progress and offer support and ideas for improvement.
140. There is a wide range of games opportunities available to the pupils and many out of school clubs and teams. Links with outside agencies provide football coaching, participation in inter school competitions and arts festivals. There are no social exclusions and all teams as far as possible are inclusive.
141. Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is satisfactory. They work well individually and in pairs sharing ideas and taking turns when using equipment. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to rise to the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to others' views.
142. All lessons underpin the principles of health, fitness and safety. Pupils are reminded of the need for warming and cooling processes and the need to exercise control and awareness of others in physical activities. Swimming lessons take place in the local baths when it is available.
143. The coordinator has introduced a new policy and scheme of work in line with Curriculum 2000 and the school has been successful in obtaining the Active Mark Award. The coordinator monitors teaching and learning plans and is available for support. Assessment and recording procedures need further development to give more accurate information of pupils' attainment and progress. Accommodation indoors and outdoors is satisfactory but the space in both school halls is reduced by staging, the computer suite and dining tables. Fixed apparatus and other resources are adequate but in need of upgrading.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the national expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. This reflects the fact that religious education is taught well in the school. A good range of world faiths is represented in the work. Photographs and a portfolio of work show that the school is providing a balanced religious education programme. Across both key stages progress is satisfactory. This was the judgement at the last inspection. The school has maintained satisfactory progress. SEN pupils make good progress.
145. Pupils are expected to think for themselves and to make connections between stories they hear and every day life. In Year 6 the pupils understand how important is the place of worship to a Sikh. Good teaching points on designing a Gurdwara enabled the pupils to make a model showing the interior of the building. Pupils worked enthusiastically, helping each other and appreciating each other's designs. Pupils in Year 5 consider such things as fasting. They know that fasting means not eating or drinking for a very long time and that Muslims celebrate at the end of Ramadan. They responded well to the lesson by making an Eid card and decorating it with the symbolic patterns of Islam. Teachers make effective use of drama in encouraging the pupils to talk about feelings. In Year 2 the pupils remembered the story of the Prodigal Son. They acted the story, speaking about unfairness and forgiveness. Pupils' attitudes are good, they work hard, concentrate well and are confident in joining in discussions.
146. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory. Lessons are planned to take account of the pupils' knowledge and experience. Teachers use a variety of methods to enthuse the pupils. In assemblies pupils are encouraged to express their ideas on values that they admire in people. They can talk about hunger and understand the good work of charities such as Christian Aid. Teachers use a brisk pace to hold the interest of the pupils. Good subject knowledge by the teachers enables pupils to learn the importance of symbolism in different faiths. They know what Hindus believe and that they pray together at home and in their place of worship, a mandir. Younger pupils have a good knowledge of the Bible and they can retell stories of Jesus. Sensitive teaching encourages them to think about belonging; that everyone is special and God forgives everybody. The teachers' plans and the lessons seen show that they are following the locally agreed syllabus. The amount of time planned for religious education in Years 1,2 and 3 is lower than nationally expected. More time is needed to meet the objectives of some lessons, to make links with literacy through independent writing and to give effective feedback.
147. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has plans to review the new Liverpool Agreed Syllabus and to draw up schemes of work to ensure progression across both key stages. Resources are organised to include a range of books, artefacts from many world faiths, videos, Bibles and work sheets. The teachers make good use of local resources, visiting mosques and churches. They use the expertise of people in the community to talk to the pupils. Visitors have included local clergymen. The pupils are looking forward to November when a Sikh story teller is to visit the school.