

INSPECTION REPORT

Northcote Primary School
Liverpool

LEA area : Liverpool

Unique Reference Number : 104564

Headteacher : Mr R Morgan

Reporting inspector : Mr D S Roberts
1743

Dates of inspection : 3rd December & 6th – 9th December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706725

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and junior with nursery
Type of control :	LEA maintained
Age range of pupils :	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Cavendish Drive Walton Liverpool L9 1HW
Telephone number :	0151 284 1919
Fax number :	0151 284 1920
Appropriate authority :	Governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr D Currie
Date of previous inspection :	May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D S Roberts, RgI	English Science Physical education	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
Mrs F Kennedy, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr B Frost, Team Inspector	Mathematics Information technology Under fives	Curriculum and assessment
Mr A Watson, Team Inspector	Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
Mrs S Williams, Team Inspector	History Geography Art	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport SK8 1BB
Telephone number: 0161 282 2982

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

During their time in the school, the majority of pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, science and information technology.

- Teaching is good in most lessons and often very good, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented successfully and are having a positive effect on standards throughout the school.
- The headteacher and governing body work together effectively to provide a sense of purpose and clear educational direction for the work of the school.
- The school is highly successful in supporting the personal and social development of pupils throughout the school and particularly in the early years.
- Excellent provision is made for extra-curricular activities.
- The school's very good links with the community enhance and enrich the pupils' learning.

Where the school has weaknesses

Curriculum planning in the nursery does not place enough emphasis on the mathematical area of learning, and does not identify clear objectives for outdoor physical activities.

- I. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support learning in other subjects.

This is a good school. Weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well, but will form the basis for the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. National Curriculum test results for the three years up to 1998 showed a rate of improvement in the performance of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science, which was significantly better than that found nationally. During the period between the two inspection, the proportion of Key Stage 2 pupils reaching expected levels increased from 22 per cent to 53 per cent in English, from 29 per cent to 54 per cent in mathematics, and from 46 per cent to 67 per cent in science. In addition, significant improvements have been made in the provision for information technology. Better teaching and resources have contributed greatly towards the improvement in pupils' progress and attainment in the subject.

Throughout the school, improved planning and assessment procedures are helping teachers to extend pupils appropriately, and to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in English, mathematics, science and information technology. Outside the core subjects, the quality of work in gymnastics has been improved despite the limited floor space in the existing school hall.

Significant improvements have also been made to the school development planning process and to the quality of the plan itself. Governors and staff are now increasingly involved, and targets for improvement are set out clearly and supported with relevant information about action to be taken. The school is fortunate in having a well informed, perceptive and committed governing body. The involvement and support of some members have been important factors in enabling the headteacher and staff to overcome the difficulties imposed by an old and unsuitable building and continue to provide good quality education for their pupils. The school is well placed to consolidate and build on the improvements achieved to this stage.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	<i>Key</i>	
			<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
			<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
			<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
English	D	C		
Mathematics	D	B		
Science	D	C		

The table shows that although the school's results are below the average for all schools in all three subjects, they are in line with those of similar school in English and science, and above the average for similar schools in mathematics. The school's overall performance is above average in comparison with similar schools.

The proportion of pupils at Key Stage 2 reaching the national standard was below the national average. However, a small majority of pupils reached Level 4, the national standard in English, mathematics and science.

Inspection findings for Key Stage 2 indicate an improving picture, with standards in English, mathematics and science being broadly in line with the national average. Standards in information technology are consistent with the national expectations for the end of the key stage, and those for religious education meet the requirements set out in the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus. In all other subjects, pupils generally work at appropriate levels for their age. Many achieve particularly good standards in swimming, where the large majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres or more unaided, before leaving at the end of Year 6.

Taking into account the very low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery, the majority of children make generally good progress in the early years. By the age of five, most achieve appropriate standards in the physical and creative areas of learning and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In language and literacy and mathematics, however, standards are generally below those expected by the time children enter Key Stage 1.

Good progress is sustained at Key Stage 1, and the great majority of pupils reach the national standard by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, standards in information technology meet the national expectation and in religious education they are in line with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. In all other subjects, pupils work at levels which are appropriate for their age.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	good	very good	good
Mathematics	good	good	good
Science	n/a	good	good
Information technology	n/a	good	good
Religious education	n/a	good	good
Other subjects	good	good	good

Teaching was at least satisfactory in 100 per cent of lessons, good or better in 77 per cent, and very good or excellent in 32 per cent.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Good; based on good relationships and showing equal concern for the academic and personal development of the pupils.
Leadership and management	Purposeful leadership by the headteacher, combining effectively with the governing body to provide clear educational direction for the work of the school.
Curriculum	Good; broad and balanced with strong emphasis on development of literacy and numeracy skills; scope for more use of information technology to support learning in other subjects and some attention needed to nursery curriculum. Excellent provision for extra-curricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Generally good provision; some individual education plans are not specific enough.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good; all dimensions promoted successfully.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good staffing and resources; unsuitable building due to be replaced in near future.
Value for money	Good.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>II. They are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.</p> <p>III. They find it easy to approach the school with problems or questions.</p> <p>IV. The school gives them a good understanding of what is taught.</p> <p>V. The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress.</p> <p>VI. The school enables their children to achieve a good standard of work.</p> <p>VII. Their children are encouraged to get involved with extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>VIII. They are satisfied with the work which their children are expected to complete at home.</p> <p>IX. The school's values have a positive effect on their children.</p> <p>X. Their children like school.</p>	<p>XI. A small minority of parents would like the</p>

The inspectors' findings support the positive views expressed by the parents. They find the use of homework to support pupils' learning to be good. However, the school proposes to review its approach to see if further improvements can be made to the current homework arrangements. During the meeting with the inspectors a small number of parents expressed disappointment that the new school building will not include a room for parents. The school is aware of these concerns. Many parents expressed their appreciation for the extra-curricular opportunities provided for their children. The inspectors agree with these views, and find the provision for extra-curricular activities to be outstanding.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve further the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- * make consistent use of information technology to support work across the curriculum by including this aspect in the medium term planning for other subjects; and (paragraph references: 142 and 153)
- * improve the planning for mathematics and outdoor activities in the nursery by including more specific detail in the medium term and short term planning for these two areas of learning. (paragraph reference: 101)

In addition to the key issues listed above, the following recommendations, arising from areas of more relative weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- * improve the quality of a minority of individual education plans at Key Stage 2 by setting targets which are specific and measurable; (paragraph reference: 46)
- * adjust the amount of time allowed for some lessons at Key Stage 2, in order to sustain the pace of learning and pupils' concentration; (paragraph reference: 45)
- * include school aims in the information provided for parents in the school prospectus. (paragraph references: 66 and 73)

· INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

- 1 The inspection took place during the school's last academic year in a building which was completed 115 years ago.
- 2 Northcote Primary School is situated in the Walton area about four miles from the centre of Liverpool. The majority of pupils come from homes rented from the local authority or private landlords and a small proportion are from privately owned homes.
- 3 The rate of unemployment in the area is much higher than that found nationally, and this is reflected in the high proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals; fifty eight per cent are currently eligible, compared to the national average of 20 per cent.
- 4 The school currently provides full-time education for 369 pupils between four and eleven years; comprising of 186 boys and 183 girls. Two pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. At present 30 per cent of pupils are on the register for special educational needs which is significantly higher than the national average of 18.3 per cent. A total of thirty pupils are at stages three to five. Most of those in this category have moderate learning difficulties, and there are individual needs for speech and communication, visual impairment, physical and autistic conditions. Three pupils have statements of specific needs.
- 5 A further 45 children receive part-time education in the nursery class. The attainment levels of children on entry to the nursery are generally very low in comparison with those found nationally. Baseline assessments reveal that many children have delayed language development and poor mathematical skills. Few have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world, and the physical and creative skills of many are under-developed.
- 6 Since the last inspection, the number of pupils on roll has dropped from 492 to 369 pupils. The socio-economic conditions are not significantly different to those which existed at that time.
- 7 The school's main aims emphasise the commitment to support pupils' academic and wider development. These aims are reflected in the school's development plan, which includes priorities to improve pupils' basic skills as well as creating conditions which help their personal and social development.
- 8 The governors have set targets for improvements during the three years up to 2002. They are as follows:

proportion of pupils to reach Level 4 (national standard) by the end of Key Stage 2:

	<u>2000</u>		<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
English	60%	63%	66%	
Mathematics	55%	58%	65%	

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	30	22	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	23	18	22
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	42	38	42
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82.7 (66)	74 (68)	81 (88)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	23	25	22
	Girls	20	22	20
	Total	43	47	42
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (70)	90 (88)	81 (88)
	National	82 (81)	86 (80)	87 (86)

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	27	31	58

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	13	16
	Girls	19	16	23
	Total	31	29	39
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	53 (60)	54 (52)	67.2 (60)
	National	72 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	17	18
	Girls	23	21	24
	Total	37	38	42
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	64	63.8	72.4
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	7.7
	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.4
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	32
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- 1 The attainment levels of children entering the nursery are generally very low compared to those found nationally. They make generally satisfactory progress in the nursery class and their rate of progress improves during their time in the early years. The majority of children in reception classes make good progress in all of the areas of learning. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, the majority meet the standards set out in the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for their learning in the physical and creative areas of learning, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Although a significant proportion of the children reach appropriate levels in language and literacy and mathematics, standards are generally below those found nationally.
- 2 In the most recent National Curriculum tests for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of the school's pupils reaching Level 2, the national standard, was broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- 3 In the national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4, the national standard, was below that found nationally in English, mathematics, and science. However, comparative information, based on the performance of all pupils in the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests, show the school's performance to be in line with the average for schools with similar characteristics, in English and science, and above the average for similar schools in mathematics.
- 4 National test results for the three years up to 1998, indicate a rate of improvement which is significantly better than the national picture in English, mathematics and science. During the same period, there were no significant variations in terms of gender in mathematics and science. However, boys out-performed girls in English, and this is significantly different to the national picture.
- 5 Inspection findings for Key Stage 1 indicate that the great majority of pupils are on course to reach national standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science, and that standards are broadly in line with the national average. The great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress during their time in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual educational plans. They benefit from work which is appropriately challenging and from the attention provided by support staff.
- 6 Inspection findings for Key Stage 2 indicate that a majority of pupils are on course to reach the national standard in English, mathematics and science, and that standards are broadly in line with the national average. This represents an improving picture, reflecting the positive impact of literacy and numeracy lessons. Closer examination of the English results indicate that pupils performed better in reading than in writing. The school has identified writing as an area for close attention and introduced additional lessons. These create valuable opportunities for pupils to use new skills, gained during their studies in literacy lessons, in extended writing for a variety of purposes. This initiative is resulting in an improvement in the quality of pupils' writing. In addition, the arrangements to set pupils in Year 6 according to their prior attainment is also having a positive impact on standards. In mathematics, the improvement in pupils' quick recall of number contributes towards better achievement. In science, the increasing emphasis on experimental and investigative work is an important factor in improving standards.
- 7 During their time at Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make good progress.

- 8 In information technology, standards reached by pupils at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with the national expectations. The great majority of pupils, at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment
- 9 In religious education, standards at both key stages, meet fully the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus, and pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good progress.
- 10 Throughout the school, the great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment make at least satisfactory progress in all other subjects. Many of the older pupils achieve particularly good standards in geography. In physical education, a large majority of pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres or more unaided before leaving the school at the end of Year 6. In addition, a substantial proportion of pupils achieve high standards in team games and athletics. In art, the drawing skills of older pupils is a strong feature; and in music a number of pupils make particularly good progress in their instrumental work.
- 11 Pupils at both key stages make good progress in extending their literacy and numeracy skills. Recent improvements reflect the positive impact of the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Between 1996, when the last inspection was conducted, and 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard at the end of Key Stage 2 increased from 22 per cent to 53 per cent in English, and from 29 per cent to 54 per cent in mathematics.
- 12 The school is on course to go close to the challenging targets set for the Year 2001 in English and mathematics.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

- 13 Throughout the school, the pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning, and generally work with sustained concentration to meet the challenges which are set for them. This is apparent during literacy and numeracy lessons and also during work in other subjects. For example, in a science lesson on the construction of simple circuits, pupils demonstrated high levels of curiosity and drew effectively on the knowledge gained from previous lessons. They sustained concentration very well and those at all levels of attainment worked together in a responsible way. In physical education, during a dance lesson in the hall, there was a very good response when working on the development of a dance sequence in small groups. The pupils displayed mature co-operation in listening to one another's suggestions and acting on decisions made in formulating their dances. They enjoyed performing their routines and offered sensitive comments about the work of other groups.
- 14 Most pupils respond enthusiastically in the large majority of lessons in all subjects. They are attentive throughout the lesson, keen to participate in whole class discussions and they settle quickly to group and individual activities, sustaining concentration on the task in hand. A small minority of pupils who find it difficult to sustain concentration are dealt with effectively and sensitively by their teachers so that the work of other pupils is not disrupted.
- 15 The school implements consistently a comprehensive and effective behaviour and discipline policy. This enhances the caring ethos of the school by developing a calm and friendly atmosphere in which both children and teachers can work together in a positive way. In classrooms, in the playground and in their movements around the school, the majority of pupils show consideration for each other and respect for school property. They benefit from a consistent approach to encouraging good behaviour and creating an ordered and well structured atmosphere in the classrooms. This contributes significantly to raising educational standards and pupils' achievements.
- 16 Relationships are generally good throughout the school and no incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection. The school's anti-bullying policy draws on parental co-operation to prevent occurrence of bullying and deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Exclusions are imposed only after all other means of improving behaviour have been attempted. There was only one fixed-term exclusion during the school year prior to the inspection.

- 17 The children under five in the nursery and reception classes make good progress in the area of personal and social development. They behave well in class and demonstrate growing interest in the tasks they undertake. They willingly share toys and resources and change without fuss for physical education. This rate of progress is sustained throughout the school. As they get older, the pupils' positive attitudes are consistently developed and reinforced. They work sensibly in pairs or small groups, for example, on computers and their behaviour in assemblies is exemplary. The generally good behaviour, coupled with the very positive attitudes to learning, makes a significant contribution to the attainment and good progress made by the pupils.
- 18 The positive attitudes and good standards of behaviour and personal development which were apparent during the last inspection, have been maintained successfully.

Attendance

- 19 The pupils' record of attendance is satisfactory, although slightly below the national average for primary schools. Illness and holidays, taken during term time, account for almost all absence. The incidence of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average.
- 20 Punctuality has improved since the last inspection. The vast majority of the pupils arrive on time in the mornings and lessons start promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 21 Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is generally good and often very good. Seventy seven per cent of lessons observed during the inspection were good or better and 32 per cent were in the very good to excellent category. Teaching was never less than satisfactory.
- 22 In the nursery, teaching is broadly satisfactory and the very good use made of support staff is a strong feature. Many children enter the school with under-developed social skills and very careful attention is given to their personal and social development in the nursery which enables most of them to make significant progress. Although the planning of lessons for nursery children is generally satisfactory, too little emphasis is placed on the planning for mathematics and outdoor activities. Teaching in the two reception classes is generally good and often of a very good standard. The planning and assessment of children's work, organisation of lessons and classroom management are of a high standard. This promotes consistently good progress by most of the children, including those with special educational needs, in all of the areas of learning.
- 23 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is generally good and often very good. Eighty three per cent of lessons observed were good or better and 41 per cent were very good. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is also of a generally good standard. Seventy seven per cent of lessons observed were good or better and 25 per cent were very good. Teaching, at both key stages, makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. It promotes good progress by the great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment in most lessons.
- 24 The positive impact of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy on teaching throughout the school is very apparent, and teachers have incorporated similar methods of organisation into their teaching of other subjects.

- 25 The teaching of English during the daily literacy hour is very good at Key Stage 1. It is generally good at Key Stage 2, with some very good teaching towards the end of the key stage. Texts for introductory activities are carefully selected. They are usually presented appropriately, although in some classes some of the pupils sitting at the back of the group have difficulty in reading the text during the whole-class session. The imaginative approach to the teaching of phonics and other concepts in Years 1 and 2, helps to generate high levels of interest and sustained concentration. At Key Stage 2, the perceptive selection of topics and materials for study, particularly in Year 6, promotes a positive response by the pupils. At both key stages, all elements of the literacy hour are generally taught effectively, although in some lessons insufficient time is allowed for the final plenary session to consolidate learning. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff combine effectively to make good provision for pupils at different levels of ability. The arrangements for setting pupils in Year 6 according to their ability has a positive effect on their progress and attainment in English. Additional English lessons at both key stages create valuable opportunities for pupils to practise the language skills acquired during literacy lessons, in extended writing and reading activities.
- 26 The teaching of mathematics is generally good. Over 70 per cent of lessons observed were good or better, and the quality was similar at both key stages. The teaching has benefited considerably from the introduction of principles set out in the National Numeracy Strategy. Good quality planning and lively well structured exposition are strong features in the teaching. In a minority of lessons insufficient time is allowed for the final plenary session. The arrangement to group pupils in Year 6 according to their ability, is having a positive effect on the pupils' attainment and progress.
- 27 In science, the teaching is generally good and often very good particularly at Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2. The good use of resources to support experimental and investigative work is a particularly strong feature. At Key Stage 1, for example, good quality "home made" resources to investigate light were important factors in helping pupils to understand relevant concepts. At Key Stage 2, the provision and organisation of a range of food items to facilitate direct observation, enhanced significantly the quality of the learning and contributed positively towards the pupils' good progress during the lesson.
- 28 Since the last inspection there has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching in information technology. Timetabled lessons for all classes in the computer suite, and the growing confidence of teachers and support staff, have a very positive impact on the standards achieved in the subject at both key stages. Despite this commendable progress, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to use information technology to support learning in other subjects.
- 29 At both key stages, the teaching of religious education is of a generally good standard, and meets fully the requirements set out in the Agreed Syllabus.
- 30 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good at both key stages. The work in classrooms is generally matched appropriately to the needs of the pupils, although some individual education plans are not sufficiently specific. The good co-operation and joint-planning between teaching and support staff is a strong feature which helps to promote good progress by the pupils in this category.
- 31 Careful preparation makes teachers secure in their knowledge of most subjects. Lesson planning is generally good throughout the school, and assessment information is used effectively to help teachers meet pupils' needs. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are appropriate in most lessons, and effective use is made of homework to support learning, particularly in English and mathematics. The marking of work is completed conscientiously throughout the school. It offers encouragement for effort and identifies areas for further improvement. Good class management is a strong feature in most lessons and has a positive effect on standards of behaviour throughout the school.
- 32 Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in improving the standard of teaching in information technology. In addition, in all subjects, the quality of lesson planning and use of assessment to inform planning are now far more effective than during the previous inspection.

The curriculum and assessment

- 33 The school provides a curriculum which is appropriately broad, balanced and relevant. It is successful in promoting the pupils' intellectual, physical and social education. Recently, the school has gained a prestigious certificate from the Liverpool Healthy Schools' Award Scheme for its work in the area of personal, social and health education. The programme for health education includes appropriate attention to drug misuse, and sex education is taught in accordance with the governors' agreed policy.
- 34 English, mathematics and science receive appropriate emphasis in all classes and the programmes of work for these subjects meet fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection the curriculum for information technology is much improved. The pupils have greater access to each of the subjects' major elements, and the content of the work is planned carefully to enable pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding at an appropriate pace throughout both key stages. In religious education, the programme of work is based appropriately on the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus and in each class sufficient time is allocated to the subject to enable the content to be taught effectively.
- 35 The school provides an appropriate curriculum for the children under five in the reception classes where the content of the work is based appropriately on the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for their learning, prior to compulsory education. However, while this is largely the case for the nursery curriculum, the planning places too little emphasis on the mathematical area of the children's learning. In addition, too little emphasis is given to the planning of the outdoor curriculum in the nursery.
- 36 The development of the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy receives strong emphasis in all classes. These skills are promoted effectively in many areas of the curriculum and make an important contribution to the standards which the pupils attain. For example, in a Year 6 class, the study of a topic on the weather, in geography, enabled the pupils to use their numeracy skills in a number of ways. They measured wind speed, temperature and cloud cover which they recorded in graphical form to show the pattern over a month. On a residential visit to North Wales, the same pupils were able to use an Ordnance Survey map to a scale of 1:25,000 when calculating distances. They also studied the main features of a limestone pavement and calculated accurately the average depth of the grikes. Overall, the school has made a good start in implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.
- 37 Although the curriculum is generally well organised, in some classes at Key Stage 2, too much time is allocated for individual lessons. This results in a loss of impetus and the pupils' interest wanes.
- 38 At both key stages, the school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Effective identification procedures are in place and individual education plans are completed for pupils who are at Stage 1 and above of the Code of Practice. At Key Stage 1, the plans are well written and contain precise and measurable targets which are reviewed at regular intervals. In a minority of classes at Key Stage 2, the targets set are too general, presenting difficulties in measuring progress accurately enough. However, effective deployment of classroom assistants and the planning of work to match the needs of the pupils are good features of the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- 39 The school makes good provision for two pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils have a good grasp of written and spoken English and have no need for extra support.
- 40 Equality of opportunity is emphasised successfully throughout the school and each pupil has appropriate access to all aspects of the curriculum. Frequent opportunities are provided for the pupils to take part in visits locally and further afield. For example, the Year 6 pupils have taken part in a residential experience this term at the Local Education Authority's environmental study centre in North Wales. In addition, the school makes outstanding provision for extra-curricular activities. The pupils have a wide choice of aesthetic, cultural, intellectual and sporting activities from which to choose. Of particular value are the reading clubs which enable Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils to advance their reading skills after school. These activities are well supported and enhance and enrich the statutory curriculum. The range and variety of these activities are testimony to the commitment of the staff, who give freely of their own time in the pupils' best interests.

- 41 The school also enables the pupils to take part in competitive sports against local schools. Recently, the school has achieved much success, and are currently Liverpool City champions for under-11 pupils in football, rugby and cricket. The school is also well placed to win the primary school's cross-country championship. In keeping with its tradition, the school also has a number of pupils who represent the city at football, cricket and athletics.
- 42 Since the last inspection, the school's planning procedures show much improvement, particularly at Key Stage 2, where they were found to provide too little continuity at the time of the last inspection. This is no longer the case. Significant improvements in this area, both in long and medium-term planning, mean that the teachers are provided with the necessary guidance to plan their work over the year to support effectively a good rate of progression in the pupils' learning.
- 43 The school has appropriate assessment procedures in place. These are realistic and effective in gathering information about the pupils' progress and in analysing their needs. The results of assessment are used appropriately to assist teachers in planning future work. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously and sensitively, giving them a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement.
- 44 Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements in the curriculum for information technology. The school recognises that it has reached the stage where it is now in a good position to develop the use of information technology to support the work in other areas of the curriculum. This is reflected in the current and detailed action plan.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 45 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is thoughtfully and successfully promoted through many aspects of the life and work of the school.
- 46 The school provides a secure basis for the pupils' spiritual development through the good quality of the work in religious education and the well planned acts of collective worship. These are reverent occasions when pupils are helped to relate ideas to their own experiences. For example, in a Key Stage 1 assembly, pupils considered why Jesus was sent down to Earth and how, at a time of giving presents to one another, they could give gifts to Jesus. This was followed by the lighting of Advent candles and prayers. Pupils' spiritual development is also encouraged by their growing appreciation of the beauty, structure and order of the natural world, for example, during their lessons in science and in art.
- 47 Pupils' moral development is supported by the positive ethos of the school and promoted successfully. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to consider how their actions and behaviour affect other pupils and adults in the school community. In these ways pupils are helped to develop their own personal values and be aware that what they do and say can contribute to the well being of other children and adults with whom they come into contact.
- 48 The pupils' social development is promoted very successfully. The good quality of the relationships within the school is a major factor contributing to this aspect of development. Strong emphasis is placed on the importance of working together, of pupils being supportive of one another and of being kind and considerate in their dealings with other people. Adults in the school community are caring and committed and set good examples for the pupils to follow. Numerous extra-curricular opportunities and residential visits contribute significantly towards the development of pupils' social skills.

- 49 A wide and varied range of opportunities is provided to support the development of pupils' cultural awareness, both in learning to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures. Aspects of the curriculum such as religious education, history, geography, art, music, drama and literature contribute positively to their understanding of their own culture and other traditions and these are supported by the unusually wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school and enthusiastically supported by the pupils. Teachers make good use of opportunities which arise during the text work in literacy sessions to extend pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. This was apparent, for example, in Year 6 when the study of Martin Luther King was handled sensitively, making a good contribution towards preparing pupils for life in a multi-ethnic society.
- 50 The good standards apparent at the last inspection have been maintained. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a strength of the school, contributing to pupils' developing understanding of responsible citizenship. This is appreciated by the large majority of parents who consider that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

- 51 The school makes good provision for the pupils' support and guidance and for ensuring their welfare, health and safety. It has successfully maintained the good standards apparent during the last inspection. The condition of the building remains poor but a new school building is nearing completion and the school will be moving into this next year.
- 52 A well conceived induction programme helps the children settle quickly and happily into the nursery and the reception classes, where they make good progress in the personal and social area of their learning. They are encouraged to work and play together, to share and take turns and to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
- 53 Throughout the school, good procedures are in place for monitoring the pupils' academic progress and personal development. Equality of access and opportunity is a notable feature of the school. Those pupils who have special educational needs receive good quality additional support from their class teachers, classroom assistants and visiting specialists, and those for whom English is an additional language are supported effectively. Child protection procedures are effective and observe guidelines provided by the local education authority. The designated teacher ensures that school policy keeps abreast of changes in statutory requirements.
- 54 Arrangements for monitoring and promoting regular attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. School procedures are made known to parents through the prospectus and newsletters and whole class and individual rewards provide good incentives for the pupils. The school receives effective support from the educational welfare service and concerns about poor attendance are followed up promptly.
- 55 Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are of a high order. Staff are consistent in the implementation of the school's assertive discipline policy, giving pupils a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Classroom rules are displayed in all the classrooms and whole school rules feature in the display in all other areas of the school. Rules are few in number but well thought out and conducive to a happy and purposeful learning environment. Relationships throughout the school are good.

- 56 The pupils know that bullying will not be tolerated by the school. They have made interesting and meaningful posters to this effect and these are displayed prominently in corridors and open areas around the building. This important topic is covered in assemblies and in the carefully planned programme of study for personal, social and health education. Conservation issues, drugs education and numerous aspects of personal safety are also included in the programme of study, with good support from visiting speakers, for example road safety officers and the school nurse. In July of this year the school was granted a prestigious "Healthy School" award by the local education authority, for achieving good all round standards in a wide range of aspects including health related exercise, healthy eating and the social climate within the school.

Partnership with parents and the community

- 57 The school has developed an effective partnership with parents and the community. This is consistent with the positive picture presented in the last inspection report. Consultation with parents prior to the inspection revealed complete confidence in approaching the school with problems or questions. The parents are almost totally in agreement that their children like school.
- 58 The quality of the information provided for parents by the school is satisfactory. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed with regard to school procedures and events. The school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents provide a great deal of information about the school. Although the school has produced a list of educational aims they are not listed in the prospectus. Formal parents' evenings are arranged at suitable intervals, providing parents with appropriate opportunities to discuss their children's progress with class teachers. The parents of younger children have daily personal contact with staff, at the beginning and end of the school day. This is a good feature of the school's provision for children under five and pupils at Key Stage 1. Annual reports are generally well written and provide parents with clear and detailed information about their children's attainment and progress, identifying weaknesses as well as strengths and setting realistic targets for further development. Some, however, place too little emphasis on identifying areas for improvement.
- 59 Parental involvement in the pupils' learning is good. Many of the parents give strong support to their children's reading development through effective use of the home-school reading scheme. Good use is made of homework and this is having a positive impact on educational standards throughout the school. The parents of pupils on the register of special educational needs are provided with appropriate opportunities for involvement in the setting and reviewing of targets and for supporting their children at home.
- 60 The school has very good links with the community. A well planned programme of educational visits enriches classroom learning and makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Strong links with local churches are helping to promote the pupils' spiritual and moral development as well as providing venues for the whole school to join together for church services in celebration of the major Christian festivals. Fund raising for charity is an important part of school life, helping to extend the pupils' appreciation of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.
- 61 The school receives very good support from the neighbouring supermarket. Pupils visit the store in connection with their studies in a range of subjects, notably design technology and geography. The organisation has generously donated funds towards security arrangements for the new school building and development of the school library.
- 62 The school has established very good links with a nearby secondary school. Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school each week for information technology lessons and this is making a significant contribution to the good standards they are achieving in this subject, as well as helping to prepare them for the next stage of their education.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

- 63 The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides purposeful leadership and combines effectively with the governing body to provide clear educational direction for the work of the school. This has allowed the school to achieve a good rate of improvement since the last inspection. The move to a modern building in the near future together with the management structures which are now established, indicate that the school is well placed to maintain this rate of improvement.
- 64 The active and committed governing body makes an important contribution towards school improvement. Its members are regularly involved in all aspects of the school's work through their participation in specific committees. The work of some members has been of particular value and importance recently during the planning and building of the new school, which is due to open within a term. Some individuals are particularly generous with their time. They attend the school regularly for meetings about issues relating to the new building, and also visit classrooms as part of their work in particular areas of the curriculum. The governing body maintains an overview of all matters, and combines effectively with the senior management team to ensure that statutory requirements are met fully.
- 65 Co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum also make a positive and effective contributions. In English, mathematics, science and information technology, co-ordinators from both key stages co-operate effectively to ensure continuity of learning in their subjects. All other subjects are also co-ordinated effectively. School aims are listed clearly in the policy for teaching and learning. The prospectus provides good guidance for parents about relevant matters, however the school's educational aims are not listed in this document.
- 66 Effective arrangements have been developed for monitoring teaching and learning. The headteacher visits classrooms regularly to observe lessons. Recently, the main focus has been on literacy and numeracy lessons. Observations are carried out according to agreed criteria, and feedback is provided to teachers soon after the lesson observed. This has a positive impact on pupils' progress. Co-ordinators monitor the planning of work in subjects and the work produced by pupils. They are provided with a limited amount of time to help them with their roles.
- 67 Arrangements for school development planning are well conceived. The auditing process to identify targets for improvements draw effectively on action-plans produced by subject co-ordinators. Priorities are listed clearly and implications for staff development, learning resources and costs, are included in the final plan.
- 68 Equality of opportunity for all pupils is promoted very successfully. The information gained from monitoring the performance of individual pupils in order to set targets for improvement is also used to check the performance of pupils in various categories. The school is aware of the fact that the performance of boys in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 has been better than that of the girls, particularly in English. This issue has being examined carefully to ensure that girls are not disadvantaged in any way. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice, although some of the individual education plans at Key Stage 2 are not sufficiently specific.
- 69 A positive ethos has been established. Teachers and non-teaching staff are well motivated and always anxious to improve their skills through in-service or self-evaluation. The headteacher and governing body are committed to promoting the academic and wider development of pupils, and to helping them reach their potential in all aspects of the curriculum.
- 70 Since the last inspection, considerable improvements have been made to the school development planning process. It now contains comprehensive information about planned initiatives, and the systematic way in which co-ordinators' action plans are incorporated into the final school plan is a particularly good feature.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 71 The school is appropriately staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum for children under five and for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2. Responsibilities for co-ordinating the various subjects and aspects are appropriately shared and clearly defined.
- 72 The school has sufficient qualified and experienced support staff to meet the demand of the curriculum. Classroom support is well organised and is of benefit to the teachers and the pupils.
- 73 Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. Appraisal and self-evaluation help to identify individuals' strengths and development needs. The school achieves an appropriate balance between the needs of the school and those of individual teachers. Effective induction procedures for new and newly qualified teachers support the continuing provision of good quality teaching and curriculum development.
- 74 The staff work hard to overcome the difficulties presented by an old and unsuitable building. Many of the teaching areas are too small for the number of pupils who occupy them, making practical work difficult to organise. Hall space is very limited and it is impossible to bring the whole school together for assembly. Dining space is inadequate. Outdoor provision is unsatisfactory, with insufficient playground space for the number of pupils on roll. The surface of the Key Stage 1 playground is rough and uneven and drainage is poor.
- 75 The interior of the building is clean, bright and cheerful. Display throughout the school is of a good quality, predominantly featuring the pupils' own work and reflecting a broad and balanced curriculum. The display does much to create a warm, welcoming and stimulating learning environment inside school, in sharp contrast to the exterior of the building.
- 76 Governors, staff, parents and pupils look forward with great anticipation to the move to the new building in the near future.
- 77 Resource levels are at least satisfactory and good in science, art, information technology and physical education. The school has sufficient books, materials and equipment to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Resources are stored carefully and readily accessible to pupils and staff. The library is not fully stocked at present as the school prepares for the move to the new school building.

The efficiency of the school

- 78 The management of resources is efficient and effective, and the school operates successfully within its budget. Good use is made of grants for specific purposes, including the element within the school's funding for making provision for pupils with special educational needs. The relatively large amount of money retained in the contingency fund is to meet the costs of educational resources and equipment when the school transfers to the new building in the near future.
- 79 Educational priorities are identified effectively through the school development planning process. These arrangements have been improved significantly since the last inspection, and now provide a clear indication of targets for improvements and the implications for spending.
- 80 Learning resources are used and managed effectively. And any gaps in terms of resources or materials are quickly identified through the co-ordinators' action planning, and listed as priorities in the school development plan. Skilful management and hard work by all staff and governors during recent years have enabled the school to overcome the difficulties imposed by an unsuitable building. This has enabled pupils to receive their full entitlement and enjoy appropriate access to all aspects of the curriculum.

- 81 Effective procedures have been established to ensure financial control. The finance committee maintains a regular overview of the budget situation and is able to draw on the advice of the local education authority's finance section when necessary. On a daily basis, senior staff co-operate effectively with the administrative staff to monitor spending and update budget information. All of the recommendations made following the last full audit of finance by the local education authority have been implemented. The governing body proposes to request a fresh audit when the school moves to its new building.
- 82 Taking into account the children' very low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery and the income available, the school provides good value for money in terms of the educational standards achieved and the quality of education provided.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

- 83 The children under five are taught in the nursery before moving to the two reception classes. On entry to the nursery, assessment evidence indicates that children's level of attainment are generally very low compared to those found nationally. Many of them have delayed language development and poor basic mathematical skills. Few have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative skills are under developed. In addition, few have appropriate personal and social skills and the great majority are immature for their age.
- 84 Children make a hesitant start in the nursery class as they become familiar with new routines. However, their rate of progress is generally satisfactory and increases in the reception classes where most children make good progress towards the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for their learning prior to Key Stage 1. Despite this, standards are generally below those expected nationally by the age of five, in language and literacy and in the mathematical area of their learning. In the physical and creative areas of their learning and in their knowledge and understanding of the world the majority of children make good progress and standards are close to those expected nationally.
- 85 During their time in the nursery and reception classes, most children make good progress in their personal and social development. The children in the nursery are helped to settle quickly into the day-to-day routines. They develop increasing confidence in choosing activities which interest them. By the time they are five the great majority work sensibly as part of a group and many are able to work independently with increasing levels of concentration. The children make good progress in both the nursery and at the reception stage in forming good relationships with each other and with all of the adults who help them. Although many of the nursery children are initially hesitant in selecting activities, by the time they are five most are much more confident and demonstrate increasing independence. All of the under fives treat the materials they use with care and they are considerate towards each other.
- 86 In the language and literacy area of their learning, many of the nursery children use a limited vocabulary when trying to express their thoughts and feelings but throughout their time in the nursery, they make steady progress. The majority of children make good progress in the reception class although a substantial proportion find it difficult to express their thoughts with sufficient fluency.
- 87 Few of the nursery children turn readily to books when they are given time to select their activities. However, they are interested in stories read to them and listen attentively to the adults who read to them. In reception, although few of the children can read a range of words they use frequently, they are beginning to understand how words and pictures convey meaning.

- 88 In writing, many of the nursery children have poor co-ordination skills and have difficulty controlling pencils and mark making tools. However, most make good progress during their time in the reception classes and by the time they are five many are beginning to use an increasing range of words to communicate meaning. Most of the reception class children can write their names although few can do so with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters.
- 89 In the mathematical area of their learning the nursery children have a limited vocabulary. Few can describe shape, position, size and quantity although they become increasingly familiar with number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games. Reception class children make good progress in their number work. Higher attaining children can count with increasing reliability to 10 and beyond. They can order numbers in correct sequence and are beginning to understand basic addition and subtraction processes. Despite this many of the reception children do not reach expected levels for their age.
- 90 The restricted vocabulary of children in the nursery inhibits their progress initially in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, as they encounter an appropriate range of experiences and activities they make satisfactory progress. They become increasingly confident in computer work and demonstrate developing skills in using the mouse to control screen images. They use a range of building materials to make structures and make effective use of cutting and sticking techniques when joining materials together. Many of the children in reception become more confident in talking about their experiences at home, at school and in the local environment. They show a growing awareness of objects around them and make good progress in using their observational skills. For example, in one of the reception classes, the children were helped to observe and describe changes that took place when they added drops of food colouring into different containers. One contained a little cooking oil, another was partly filled with plain water and a third contained very salty water. The children were encouraged to explain what they saw before adding detergent and stirring them. They made interesting predictions and developed some new vocabulary as they were helped to observe the changes that occurred.
- 91 Progress in the physical area of the children's learning is satisfactory in the nursery although a substantial number of children are unable to control a paint brush or hold mark making equipment comfortably. However, in some of their outdoor activities they are able to show increasing skills in their physical development especially when using wheeled equipment or when using the large outdoor climbing apparatus. In reception, children make generally good progress in their physical development. They demonstrate a growing awareness in using space and equipment imaginatively and they quickly develop increasing skills in using tools, equipment and materials by the end of the reception stage.
- 92 Children in the nursery make generally good progress in the creative area of their learning. They can sing tunefully a growing repertoire of appropriate songs and rhymes, and are able to use a range of painting and print making skills with increasing control and imagination. Some of the older reception class children show good imagination in role play activities. They use a widening range of materials, tools and other resources to express their ideas and to communicate their feelings.
- 93 The quality of the teaching is broadly satisfactory in the nursery with some particular strengths in relation to the children's personal and social education. The planning of the work generally takes appropriate account of each of the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for the children's learning. However, the planning in the mathematical area and that for outdoor activities is less effective than in other aspects of the provision. In these areas, there are some instances of missed opportunities to assist the children's progress. All of the adults who teach in the nursery make an important contribution in providing a safe and secure learning environment. They are sensitive to the children's needs and employ a good range of assessment strategies to assist them in planning further activities and experiences in most areas of the children's learning.

- 94 In the reception classes, the quality of the teaching in all areas of the children's learning is generally good and often of a high calibre. The work is carefully planned and builds successfully upon the children's early experiences. The tasks which the children are set provide them with challenging experiences. The work has appropriate pace and rigour. The pupils are well managed and the activities are matched carefully to the children's different levels of attainment. Good use is made of support staff, parents and other volunteers who provide valuable assistance and help to give the children much useful support and guidance especially when they are divided into small groups. In both the reception classes the development of the children's literacy skills is given particular attention. The teaching of the literacy and numeracy sessions occurs daily and the reinforcement of language and mathematical skills in all areas of the children's learning makes a valuable contribution to the children's literacy and numeracy development during the reception stage.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

- 95 Comparative information based on the 1999 National Curriculum test results for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2, show the school's performance in English to be below average for all schools but in line with the performance of schools with similar characteristics.
- 96 During the three years up to 1998, the rate of improvement in national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 has been considerably better than the national picture. During the same period boys outperformed the girls in a manner which was significantly different to the national picture.
- 97 In the most recent tests for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2, the national standard, was close to the national average for reading and writing. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, a majority of pupils reached Level 4, the national standard. However, this proportion was below the national average.
- 98 Inspection findings for Key Stage 1 are consistent with the most recent national test results. They indicate that a large majority of pupils are on course to reach the national standard in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the end of the key stage. Most pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time at Key Stage 1.
- 99 Inspection findings for Key Stage 2 show a better picture than that presented by the most recent national tests but similar to the tests conducted in 1998. They indicate that standards are broadly in line with the national average. The school has recognised that standards in reading are significantly better than those in writing and produced measures to address the issue. The success of this new emphasis on writing is reflected in the generally good progress made by pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, during English lessons.
- 100 The great majority of pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and generally achieve standards which are consistent with the national expectation by the end of both key stages. Younger pupils build progressively on the good foundation provided in the reception classes, listening attentively and demonstrating growing confidence in responding to their teachers' questions. They participate very effectively during the introductory activities for literacy lessons, offering clear answers to questions arising from the study of various texts from the "big books" and work on phonics. Towards the end of the key stage, higher and average attainers make particularly good progress when engaged in investigative activities during science lessons. They are able to explain clearly the reasons for their actions and what they trying to achieve. Lower attainers benefit from regular interaction with support and voluntary staff and make significant progress in extending their speaking skills during most lessons.

- 101 At Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils communicate with growing confidence and continue to build effectively on their early skills. They show a good understanding of the main points arising from their studies in various subjects and, particularly, issues from the text work during the literacy hour. Higher and average attainers show good skills in incorporating new words into their vocabulary and using them appropriately when answering questions or making suggestions. Lower attainers continue to increase confidence and contribute more regularly during whole class discussions. The majority of older pupils talk and listen confidently within a wide range of contexts including whole-school assemblies, whole-class and group settings. The arrangements for setting Year 6 pupils according to ability for the literacy hour is proving to be very beneficial for the development of their speaking and listening skills. The closer matching of work to the pupils' ability levels is promoting a higher rate of contribution by pupils at all levels of attainment. In addition, separate provision for higher attainers is resulting in a significant improvement in the quality of their contributions to discussion. Many show a good ability to justify their opinions when engaged in discussions arising from text work during literacy lessons. This was apparent, for example, when the set of higher attainers in Year 6 studied the life of Martin Luther King. The pupils were able to explain and justify their views on issues such as racism and civil rights clearly and confidently.
- 102 In reading, the majority of pupils make good progress at both key stages and most benefit from the support provided by parents for the school's home reading initiative. By the end of Key Stage 1, most of the average and higher attainers read accurately and with understanding. They make appropriate use of an increasing range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning, and some of the higher attainers read fluently with growing expression. Lower attainers who have yet to reach appropriate standards for their age benefit greatly from the support provided by teachers and support staff and make significant progress in relation to prior attainment. The strong emphasis placed on the development of phonic skills during the text and word level elements of the literacy hour is proving very beneficial.
- 103 At Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils continue to make good progress and begin to read independently from fiction and non-fiction books. Increasing opportunities to use information technology is motivating many pupils to improve their reading skills in order to follow computer instructions. As they progress, pupils read from an increasingly wide range of reading materials including fiction and non-fiction books. The majority of older pupils read accurately and fluently from books selected from the class library. Higher and average attainers express preferences for certain types of books and explain effectively why they like particular characters in the stories they have read. For example, one pupil in Year 6 was able to explain why she had enjoyed reading Charles Dickens's "Christmas Carol", and why she particularly liked or disliked certain characters in the story.
- 104 The majority of pupils, at both key stages, make good progress in developing their skills in writing. By the end of Key Stage 1, most are able to express their ideas in a sequence of sentences, making appropriate use of capital letters and full-stops. Higher attainers show good skills in spelling; average attainers spell familiar words correctly and less familiar words are phonetically correct. The majority of pupils use their writing skills effectively in other subjects, such as science, to write about their observations and discoveries. Good progress is sustained at Key Stage 2, where pupils begin to show an increasing awareness of the reader when writing for a variety of purposes. They significantly increase their writing skills through the word and sentence level elements of the literacy hour. They also benefit greatly from additional English lessons which create opportunities for them to engage in extended writing for various purposes. However, the writing skills of a substantial proportion of lower attaining pupils remains below the level expected for their age, and this is particularly apparent in their spelling. The arrangements to set pupils in Year 6 according to ability enables the school to meet the requirements of lower attainers and is having a positive effect on the quality of written work produced by pupils at all levels of attainment. This is because areas of study and tasks set are appropriately challenging. Some of the written work produced by higher attaining pupils following their study of Martin Luther King, for example, was of a particularly good standard.
- 105 The requirements of the National Literacy Strategy are being successfully implemented and are having a positive effect at both key stages. Pupils make good progress during the literacy lessons in extending their skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing. They make good use of these skills in other subjects, particularly information technology, science, history and geography.

- 106 The pupils' response during English lessons is generally very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Pupils throughout the school enjoy literacy lessons and contribute enthusiastically during the whole-class elements. The youngest pupils settle quickly and listen attentively during introductions to lessons. They often offer imaginative answers to questions and sustain concentration throughout the group and independent work. This is also the case in most lessons at Key Stage 2, but in some lessons a small minority of pupils find difficulty in maintaining concentration during group activities.
- 107 The quality of teaching is generally very good at Key Stage 1, where 75 per cent of lessons observed were in that category, and generally good and sometimes very good at Key Stage 2.
- 108 At both key stages, the teaching benefits greatly from the clear structures set out in the National Literacy Strategy. Planning is very effective in ensuring that pupils are appropriately extended. Lesson organisation and class management are strong features, although there are instances at Key Stage 2 where insufficient time is allowed for the final plenary session of the literacy hour restricting opportunities for consolidating learning. The high quality interaction between teacher and pupils during the whole-class introduction to lessons is a consistent feature at Key Stage 1 and in many lessons at Key Stage 2. The imaginative approach to teaching phonics and other concepts during text and word level work in Years 1 and 2 helps to generate high levels of interest and sustained concentration.
- 109 At Key Stage 2, the perceptive selection of topics for the introductory texts in many lessons promotes a positive response by the pupils. For example, the work in Year 4, which required pupils to write as if they were newspaper reporters, provided good opportunities to write for a specific purpose. In Year 6, the selection of Martin Luther King's speech as a focus for pupils' written work, and the skilful way in which the lesson was presented, stimulated a very positive response by the pupils.
- 110 Marking is a strong feature at both key stages. It contributes significantly towards accurate assessment procedures. The careful use of assessment information to plan further work ensures that tasks and activities are appropriately challenging for pupils at different levels of attainment. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff combine effectively. This is an important factor in the good provision made for pupils with special educational needs.
- 111 The work in English is co-ordinated very efficiently and this contributes towards the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The programme of work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and makes good provision for all pupils.
- 112 Since the last inspection, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has contributed towards a good rate of improvement in the attainment of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2. This has been significantly better than the rate of improvement found nationally.

Mathematics

- 113 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum test in mathematics held at the end of Key Stage 2, indicates that the school's performance is above average when compared with similar schools although below average when compared with the performance of all schools.
- 114 Taking the three years, 1996 to 1998 together, the pupils' performance in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, was close to the national average. At Key Stage 2, it was just below the national average. During this period there were no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys. Examination of test results for the three years up to 1998 reveals a rate of improvement which is significantly better than the national picture.
- 115 Inspection evidence indicates an improving picture at the end of both key stages, with standards broadly in line with those found nationally. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is the most important factor in securing improvement.

- 116 Many pupils enter Year 1 with limited mathematical skills. However, most including those with special educational needs make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, this good progress is continued and at Year 6, the pupils from the two classes are organised into three groups for mathematics. This arrangement is helpful in enabling the average and lower attaining pupils to be taught in small groups and is an important factor which contributes to the pupils' good progress.
- 117 At the beginning of Key Stage 1, the pupils make good progress in counting accurately and in ordering numbers to 10. They can add and subtract numbers with increasing confidence when solving problems and most can read and write the numbers involved although the lower attaining pupils are less confident in writing correctly digits to 10 despite the use of a range of support material. Towards the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils good progress in number work is reflected in their growing ability to count reliably and to order numbers to 100 and more. The pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of place value and can understand that the position of a digit signifies its value. By Year 2, the pupils make good progress in choosing appropriate operations when solving addition and subtraction problems. They can identify and use basic fractions such as halves and quarters and can recognise sequences of numbers including odds and evens. For example, in one of the Year 2 classes, the pupils investigated a range of number bonds to 20. They were quick to spot patterns and during discussion to point out that odd numbers cannot be shared equally between two. The higher attaining pupils were able to demonstrate their developing mathematical reasoning by generalising after investigating the resulting total when two odd numbers were added together. They concluded accurately that the answer would always be an even number.
- 118 Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in number. They make increasing progress in understanding place value and by Year 6 the great majority are proficient in using accurately the four rules of number. They demonstrate increasing confidence in solving a range of problems, including those involving the extension of the number system including negative numbers and the relationship of fractions, decimals and percentages. The higher attaining pupils, for example, were able to use negative co-ordinators to translate shapes from the first to the fourth quadrant.
- 119 At both key stages, the pupils make good progress in their work on shape, space and measures. The youngest pupils use accurately a range of non-standard units in their measuring activities. They can estimate reasonably well and are able to record their findings carefully. They use comparative language with confidence and by the end of Key Stage 1, they can use standard units of length, mass, capacity and time with reasonable accuracy. The pupils maintain this good progress at Key Stage 2. They can use mathematical names for common three and two dimensional shapes and can describe their properties when classifying them in various ways. The oldest pupils can draw common two dimensional shapes in different orientations on grids. For example, in a class of older pupils they understood how to transform various two dimensional shapes by translation, reflection and rotation. The work was presented clearly and displayed effectively. The pupils were able to describe how they had completed the tasks and in so doing were able to demonstrate their increasing progress in this aspect of their work. By Year 6, most of the pupils have a good understanding of the properties of various triangles and can use their knowledge to group them correctly. They measure angles accurately and can use related vocabulary when, for example, describing acute, obtuse and right angles. The higher attaining pupils can understand and describe the relationship of the circumference, diameter and radius of a circle and can use this knowledge when solving related problems.
- 120 Pupils in Year 6 make good progress in handling data. They are able to gather, record and interpret information using an appropriate range of charts, diagrams, tables and graphs. The oldest pupils have a good grasp of the concept of probability. The higher attainers can understand and use the probability scale from 0 to 1.
- 121 At both key stages the pupils' numeracy skills are developed and practised appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. For example, the oldest pupils, taking part in geography work on a residential visit to North Wales, made good use of their mathematical skills when calculating the average depth of the local river and were able to draw the river's profile as a cross section using an appropriate scale.

- 122 Throughout the school, the pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work in mathematics. They enjoy the rapid oral mental work at the beginning of the lessons and as the lesson proceeds they listen attentively to explanations and instructions. They persevere diligently when faced with minor difficulties and willingly seek and act on advice from their teachers and the adults who help them. The pupils behave very well and co-operate productively when required to work together.
- 123 The quality of teaching is generally good at both key stages. Over 75 per cent of lessons observed were good or very good. Good quality planning and lively well-structured exposition or explanation by the teacher are strong features of the teaching. The teaching demonstrates secure subject knowledge which is reflected in the good quality of the questioning. This helps to assess the pupils' understanding, to extend their thinking and to correct misconceptions. Good quality assessment procedures are in place and the results are used effectively to inform future planning. For example, in a Year 2 class, the pupils were set half termly targets following careful evaluation of their performance in mathematics. These targets were made clear to the pupils and were written on cards placed on each table stating precisely what they were expected to achieve. In most classes, the structure of lessons is good and an appropriate allocation of time is given to the various elements of the numeracy hour. However, in a minority of lessons, the time devoted to direct teaching is too long, leaving insufficient time for the pupils to engage in relevant tasks. In these lessons insufficient time is available for the final plenary session in order to consolidate learning and to extend the pupils' thinking. In all classes appropriate attention is given to matching the work to the pupils' levels of ability. This is helping the pupils with special educational needs. They are ably assisted by the good use made of support equipment and resources. In addition, good quality interaction by classroom assistants is another factor which helps the pupils with special educational needs to make good progress towards the targets set for them.
- 124 Since the last inspection the school has continued to maintain the quality of the work in mathematics. Further strides have been made in a number of important areas. Professional training for key staff and all of the teachers has resulted in the school making a good start to implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. In most classes appropriate attention is given to the balance of rapid oral mental work, precise direct teaching, the time for pupils to engage in practical work and independent tasks and time for the final plenary. This structure brings a sparkle to the curriculum in mathematics which is only diminished when insufficient time is allocated to these important elements of each lesson. The time allocated to the teaching of mathematics is appropriate and the content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Science

- 125 Comparative information based on the 1999 National Curriculum test results for pupils reaching the end of Year 6, show the school's performance to be below the average for all schools, but in line with the average for schools with similar characteristics.
- 126 During the three years up to 1998, the rate of improvement in the national test results for science at the end of Key Stage 2 has been significantly better than the national picture. During the same period there has not been any significant variation in the performance of pupils in terms of gender, race or background.
- 127 There are no national tests for science at the end of Key Stage 1. However, teacher assessment indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard by the end of the key stage is consistent with that found nationally.
- 128 In the most recent tests for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard was below that found nationally. However, a majority of pupils did reach Level 4, the level expected for the pupils' age.
- 129 Inspection findings for Key Stage 1 are consistent with the national test results and indicate that a large majority of pupils are on course to reach the national standard by the end of Key Stage 1. The great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in Years 1 and 2.

- 130 Inspection findings for Key Stage 2, indicate a better picture than the most recent national test results. They indicate that standards are broadly in line with the national average and that a clear majority of pupils are on course to reach the national standard by the end of the key stage. Most pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time at the key stage. The improvements in pupils' attainment and progress have been brought about by a more systematic coverage of the programmes of study and increased emphasis on experimental and investigative work.
- 131 At Key Stage 1, the great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress in all aspects of science. They talk with increasing confidence and accuracy about the simple features of their surroundings, and begin to recognise similarities and differences between various objects, plants and materials. As they progress they begin to use simple equipment and apparatus to help with their observations and investigations. For example, pupils in Year 1 used simple equipment produced by the class teacher to investigate light. At the end of the investigation, the majority understood that light comes from a variety of sources, and that shadows are created when the light is blocked in some way. By the time they reach Year 2, the pupils' observation is more disciplined and they are able to work with a greater degree of independence. This was apparent, for example, when pupils investigated simple electronic circuits, using batteries to create power. They understood why the bulb failed to light when the circuit was broken, and higher attainers were able to experiment to find materials which would act as conductors to complete their circuits. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to make simple predictions and to say whether what happened was as they had predicted; before recording their findings using simple tables and drawings.
- 132 At Key Stage 2, pupils at all levels of attainment continue to extend their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding in all of the attainment targets set out in the programmes of study. Their observations become increasingly systematic and they recognise the importance of conducting a fair test. Pupils in Year 4 were able to demonstrate this when investigating conditions conducive to plant growth. Older pupils show a good understanding of the various factors which have to be taken into consideration when conducting a fair test and appreciate that it is possible to vary one factor while keeping others the same. In Year 5, for example, pupils investigating forces and friction recognised that the angle of a ramp, which they used to test toy cars, could be adjusted, and that its surface texture could be changed to increase the degree of friction. Pupils in Year 6 are able to carry out a number of observations over a period of time, and to compare their findings with original predictions. An example of this was provided when pupils learning about micro-organisms investigated the effect that the rotting process has on various items of food. They were able to make perceptive predictions and record them appropriately.
- 133 The work in science makes an important contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. The emphasis placed on experimental and investigative work at Key Stage 1 helps to extend pupils' vocabulary as well as creating good opportunities for developing their speaking skills. At Key Stage 2, increasing emphasis on recording findings in their books makes an important contribution towards the development of writing skills.
- 134 Although some use is made of information technology to support learning in science this aspect of the work is under-emphasised and there is scope for more consistent and systematic use of information technology in science.
- 135 The pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards science at Key Stage 1, and generally good attitudes at Key Stage 2. They show high levels of curiosity, particularly when engaged in experimental and investigative work, and generally take care to record their findings neatly. Pupils in Year 2 show particularly good attitudes. They work very sensibly during experimental and investigative activities and show a mature capacity to overcome difficulties through perseverance.
- 136 The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1, where the consistent emphasis on experimental and investigative work is strong feature. At key Stage 2, teaching is generally good with some very good teaching at the end of the key stage.

- 137 At both key stages, the planning of work in science is very effective in ensuring that all aspects are appropriately covered during the academic year. Lessons are well organised and achieve a good balance between explanation or demonstration by teachers and well conducted experimental work. Explanation and questioning skills are generally of a high standard at both key stages and often outstanding at Key Stage 1. The organisation of resources is also a consistently good feature, particularly at Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, for example, the good quality "home made" resources to investigate light were important factors in helping pupils to understand the relevant concepts. Similarly, at the end of Key Stage 2 the organisation of a range of food items to facilitate direct observation enhanced significantly the quality of the lesson and contributed positively towards the pupils' good progress in understanding how food rots. At both key stages, classroom management is a strong feature which helps to promote good behaviour. The quality of marking is good throughout the school, and the identification of targets for improvements helps teachers to plan the next stages of learning.
- 138 The programme of work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and makes good provision for all pupils. Since the last inspection, the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard at the end of Key Stage 2 has increased from 46 per cent to 67 per cent.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

- 139 At both key stages, the vast majority of the pupils are on course to achieve the national expectation by the end of Years 2 and 6 respectively. Most at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 140 At Key Stage 1, pupils develop increasing skills using the keyboard and the mouse with growing confidence and dexterity. For example, in a Year 1 class, the pupils worked in pairs using the 'Paint' programme. They could control the screen image successfully in creating intricate and imaginative designs. They understood how to amend and improve their work and could select appropriate colours to infill their designs. At the end of the lesson, the pupils were able to use correct close down procedures before switching off the computers. By the end of Key Stage 1, the Year 2 pupils make good progress in developing their skills. They develop increasing skills in making appropriate choices and in working through selected programmes of increasing complexity. For example, the Year 2 pupils understood how to use the straight line, geometric shapes and various programme tools to construct striking designs in the style of Mondrian. They knew how to improve their designs and to save their work before closing down the computer correctly.
- 141 At Key Stage 2, the pupils at all levels of attainment build successfully on their earlier skills and continue to make good progress. From Year 3 the pupils' word processing skills are well developed. They know how to select the word processing option and can type directly onto the screen. They understand how to amend, delete and improve their work and are confident in changing the font size to match their intentions. The pupils make good progress in considering how to centre their work to make it look attractive. The higher attaining pupils are able to select and use graphic images to complement their text with growing skill. The older pupils understand how to retrieve, add to and analyse stored information and to use it in relevant contexts. For example, a Year 6 class, using the facilities at a nearby secondary school were helped to gain good skills in using a spreadsheet successfully. They knew how to find their own file and could input a formula using co-ordinates to calculate pocket money expenditure over a week. They made good progress in understanding how to correct errors, amend amounts and to highlight in colour blocks to make certain aspects stand out clearly.
- 142 At both key stages, the pupils demonstrate a keen interest in the subject. They are co-operative and work productively at computer work stations. They listen attentively to their teachers and willingly act on advice they are given from their teachers, adult helpers and from each other.

- 143 The quality of teaching is good with examples of very good teaching at both key stages. Many of the teachers have a high level of subject knowledge and expertise and this is reflected in the clarity of explanations and in the guidance and direction they offer to their pupils. Lessons are well organised, and make good use of the spacious computer suite. Highly skilled questioning is a strong feature of the teaching. This does much to consolidate the pupils' learning and to help them make progress.
- 144 Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements in the subject. Judicious appointments have greatly improved the quality of teaching so that in each year group staff have a high level of expertise in information technology. A co-ordinator is now in place for each key stage and these staff members have made a significant contribution to the improvements made recently. The school has a detailed and well written five-year action plan for information technology. In addition, a comprehensive policy document and a carefully organised scheme of work mean that over both key stages all aspects of the required programmes of study are met fully. The information technology opportunities for the pupils are increasing continually. Some of the older pupils have regular access to skilled teaching at a nearby secondary school, using a well equipped computer suite. In addition many of these pupils are able to use the facilities afforded by the school's weekly computer club including the use of e-mail. When the school moves into its new building next term, the new computer suite will have additional facilities and the pupils will have access to the Internet.
- 145 In many of the classrooms, space is limited for computer work. However, the new school building will offer a much better environment for information technology work and the school has well documented plans to continue to develop the subject. Although a number of staff use information technology to support the pupils' work in literacy and numeracy and art, this aspect of provision is under-emphasised and the use of information technology to support the work in other subjects is at an early stage of development; a point which the school recognises and intends to act upon.

Religious education

- 146 By the end of both key stages, the attainment of the majority of the pupils meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and most pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 147 Throughout the school, pupils make consistent progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the traditions, practices and teachings of Christianity and other principals of world religions. At Key Stage 1, the pupils are aware that the Bible is a special book and understand that it is divided into Old and New Testaments. The younger pupils are familiar with Bible stories such as the move to Egypt by Abraham and Sarah. They know that Moses was a leader to whom God gave special rules for living. As they progress they become familiar with New Testament stories such as the Good Samaritan and are able to apply the teachings of Jesus to their own lives. They also know about Hindu gods and the Festival of Light.
- 148 At Key Stage 2, the pupils consider a wider range of issues and make good progress. The pupils in Year 3, for example, showed a secure understanding of the story of the angel's visit to Joseph. Those in Year 4 were able to place accurately the Nativity Story in chronological order, based on Matthew's gospel. Most pupils were able to recall the gifts which the wise men brought, and to describe, from their notes, the events of the nativity in the correct sequence. Year 6 pupils make good progress in their understanding of the major aspects of Sikhism. In one lesson, many showed a good understanding of when Sikhism started and understood the significance of guru Nanak's birthday.
- 149 Pupils at both key stages are well motivated and enjoy religious education lessons. The great majority work effectively in whole class and small groups and as individuals. They show respect for each other's point of view and collaborate well together particularly during group activities. Relationships between pupils and teachers are mature and productive, and most pupils handle resources and artefacts with care.

- 150 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages and teachers show a good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned and managed. Lesson objectives are clear and based appropriately on the Agreed Syllabus. At both key stages, resources are used effectively to support the pupils' learning. Assessment of pupils' progress helps teachers to adjust the degree of challenge appropriately. Good quality teacher explanation and skilful questioning are strong features at both key stages. Religious education makes an important contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Many opportunities are created for pupils to engage in extended writing about the topics they are studying.
- 151 Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in improving the programme of work in religious education. All pupils receive their curriculum entitlement and standards at both key stages have improved. Contribution from visitors enhances and enriches pupils' learning and serves to strengthen links with the community.
- 159 **Art**
- 152 At both key stages, the pupils work at levels which are appropriate for their age. The great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress; this is evident in the art work attractively displayed in the classrooms and around the school, and in the portfolios of pupils' work.
- 153 Pupils are encouraged to experiment with a variety of media and techniques in two and three dimensions. For example, the youngest pupils were able to achieve some outstanding affects with swirling patterns using finger painting, while older Key Stage 1 pupils constructed effective 'paper bag' puppets.
- 154 By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are growing in confidence in using drawing, painting, printing, collage and textiles to express their ideas and feelings. As they progress through Key Stage 2, pupils are able to represent what they see or imagine with increasing skills and attention to detail. For example, in a younger Key Stage 2 class the pupils arranged a vase of flowers in the centre of each group of tables. Observing closely what they could see, pupils were able to achieve good results in sketching the arrangement; they were particularly successful in representing light and shade.
- 155 The skills and techniques practised by pupils are developed and refined as they move through the key stage. By the end of Key Stage 2, they are able to respond with lively imagination and good technique in the use of colour to the work of famous artists, such as Roy Lichenstein, and the cubist still-life movement. The pupils' work reflected the bright simple lines and colour used by the artists. In a lesson in Year 6, the pupils considered the work of Edward Munch and Claude Monet, using their imagination to design their own pictures in the style of their chosen artist and expressing the flowing lines and merging colours. They made effective use of pastels and chalks to create the effect they were seeking with considerable success.
- 156 Pupils respond positively, and their work in art helps to develop their spiritual, cultural and aesthetic awareness. They are keen to develop their skills, which are enhanced by the use of good quality materials. Pupils work with care and are prepared to evaluate their work and modify it in the light of comments and suggestions. The outcomes display thoughtfulness and good awareness of texture, colour, shape, form, line and space.
- 157 The quality of teaching in art is good and often very good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, which is reflected in the carefully planned sequences of work prepared for the pupils. They have high expectations of the pupils and their ability to interpret elements of drawing and painting. Lessons are well organised, achieving a good balance between teacher explanation and meaningful activities. Class management is a strong feature, promoting good behaviour and contributing towards good standards in the subject.
- 165 **Design and technology**
- 158 At both key stages, the pupils work at appropriate levels for their age. Most, at all levels of attainment including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in school.

- 159 At Key Stage 1, the pupils develop good skills in designing and making. This was apparent, for example, when pupils in Year 2 made a moving picture to use when telling a story. They effectively selected and used materials such as card, scissors, split pins and pencils and used simple levers, hinges and pivots to make parts of the picture move. Most are able to select appropriate materials and to describe the processes involved in making their product. Lower attaining pupils listen well and are able to make progress with more support from their teachers. Topics are often closely linked with science. For example, in one class the pupils examined materials such as clay, cake mix and poppadums to describe texture before using them to make their product.
- 160 At Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress and extend their skills progressively. In Year 3, for example, they designed and made a free standing picture frame. From planning to completion they made good progress in selecting materials and using tools effectively. The pupils in Year 4 made a book with illustrations which stood up using techniques such as concertina, pop-up and lift-flap. They measured accurately before cutting to size. Pupils in Year 5 were able to identify a range of musical instruments including those from other cultures as part of a project to study various methods of producing sound. They made good progress in describing the construction and how the sound could be created and altered to make different notes.
- 161 The subject makes an important contribution to developing the pupils' literacy skills as they plan, design and make their products. They extend their vocabulary by the use of related terminology. Numeracy skills are effectively developed as they measure accurately and draw neat plans. Pupils are well motivated and enjoy design and technology. They behave well and work together effectively. Relationships are mature and productive and the majority of pupils handle tools with care and take a pride in their completed assignments. Teaching is good at both key stages. The curriculum is clearly set out in the context of long, medium and short term plans and lessons are planned effectively with clear objectives. High expectations and good subject knowledge ensures that lessons are challenging and move at a good pace. Effective use is made of resources to support the pupils' learning and the need to use tools safely is consistently emphasised. Design and technology is effectively co-ordinated. Since the last inspection standards have improved particularly at Key Stage 2, where greater emphasis is now placed on the use of evaluation to improve quality.
- 169 **Geography and history**
- 162 In geography and history pupils achieve levels which are appropriate to their age at both key stages. In both subjects pupils at both key stages make at least satisfactory progress with some pupils making good progress in relation to their previous attainments. As a result, high attaining pupils achieve good standards.
- 163 In geography, pupils acquire a good knowledge of places and extend their understanding of themes such as weather, rivers, settlements and environments. The systematic introduction of mapping skills promotes good progress. For example, at the end of Key Stage 1, in a lesson designed to develop their mapping skills, pupils were able to draw their own 'treasure island' map following instructions about where to place buildings and other features with the correct use of symbols and keys. Most were able to identify geographical features such as seas, rivers and mountains and were able to follow instructions using terms such as 'left', 'right', 'north', 'south', 'east' and 'west'. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils, during work on a study of the local area, made good use of aerial photographs and could identify features on maps of differing scale. They were able to locate changes in the local area, including the building of their new school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' mapping skills are well developed. Following a residential visit to the Colomendy Environmental Studies Centre, North Wales, pupils were able to use maps of varying scales and make use of four and six grid references to draw sketch maps of the area with symbols and keys. In the field work undertaken during the visit, pupils were able to find the average depth of grikes of limestone pavement, recording their findings on graphs and measure the depth of water in a river at intervals across its width, drawing cross sections. A significant number of pupils were also able to interpret geological maps and to recognise that symbols represent particular rock types. Older pupils understand the evidence provided by fossil shells found in sedimentary rocks, and know that Liverpool is built on sandstone while Colomendy is on limestone.

- 164 In history, pupils at Key Stage 1 are able to sequence events and objects and are beginning to develop a sense of chronology. For example, classes of younger Key Stage 1 pupils were beginning to understand the nature of historical evidence by considering the stories written about the birth of Jesus to illustrate the ways we can know about a real person who lived long ago. They recognised the stories were written by different people and that sometimes details of the stories recorded differing aspects of the events. At Key Stage 2, pupils' understanding of the nature of historical evidence is extended by their work in local history and their studies of different periods in the past including ancient Egyptians and Greeks, the Vikings, the Tudors, and the more recent past. In a class of younger Key Stage 2 pupils who were learning about Viking settlements in Britain, they were able to find out about aspects of the period through use of a range of sources including artefacts, pictures, photographs and books. They understood about Viking raiders and settlements and were able to link place names with settlement patterns. At Key Stage 2, pupils undertake detailed local studies and extend their skills in evaluating first-hand evidence and offering reasons for events and changes.
- 165 In both history and geography pupils apply and extend their literacy and numeracy skills very effectively. They enjoy their work in both subjects and respond positively during lessons. They work purposefully as individuals or in groups, to carry out investigations and display empathy with people in other times and places. They take a pride in their work, and their standard of presentation is usually at a good level.
- 166 The quality of teaching in geography and history is generally satisfactory and often good. The teachers have a secure knowledge of both subjects and appropriate expectations of the pupils. Field work and visits are well used to extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Map work is used to inform and record, for example, the use in history of conjectural maps of Liverpool to illustrate the changes from the 14th century, through the Civil War and its gradual development particularly throughout the 19th century as a major trading port.
- 167 The work in history and geography is well co-ordinated and schemes of work are up to date and detailed. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in planning to ensure systematic development of pupils' skills as they move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.
- 175 **Music**
- 168 The majority of the pupils at both key stages are working at levels appropriate for their age. the substantial majority of the pupils, at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in school.
- 169 At Key Stage 1, the pupils are able to memorise the words and melodies of a number of songs and are able to sing in tune. They are aware of rhythm and most pupils can clap a steady beat. The lower attaining pupils are able to sustain a steady rhythm when playing on percussion instruments. As they progress, pupils are able to follow a simple graphic score which includes rhythms and rests. They listen well and can name and identify by their sound, a range of percussion instruments. They make good progress in composing their own graphic scores and perform to the class with growing confidence.
- 170 At Key Stage 2, the pupils are involved in a wider range of musical performance. Pupils in Year 4, for example, were able to sing 'London's Burning' as a round. They progress in copying rhythmic patterns on percussion instruments and also understand that silence is an element of music. Higher and average attaining pupils play chime bars and glockenspiel with sensitivity. Pupils in Year 5 and 6, develop good vocal skills and an awareness of volume, tempo and timbre. They demonstrate crisp articulation in voice exercises and are developing a good repertoire of songs in which they memorise words and melodies. They sing songs from other cultures and progress to two part singing of songs such as 'Kumula Vista'. Higher attaining pupils are able to conduct class performances to good effect and are developing a good sense of audience.

- 171 Pupils are well motivated and enjoy music lessons. Their enthusiasm is gradually being shaped into quality performances. They work well as a class, and effectively appraise their own and each other's compositions and performances. Pupil-to-teacher relationships are secure and productive. Pupils handle with care the expensive resources they are using and listen attentively in lessons and assemblies to music from a range of cultures.
- 172 There are two specialist musicians on the staff and the overall quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and planned and have clear learning objectives. Teaching methods are varied appropriately, and this makes a significant contribution to the pace of lessons and helps to sustain pupils' interest. At both key stages resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning.
- 173 Music makes only a limited contribution to the development of the pupils' writing skills with the emphasis being placed on performance rather than written work. The extended vocabulary arising from the study of music in other cultures makes an important contribution towards the development of language skills.
- 174 Since the last inspection, increasing emphasis on the development of listening and appraising skills have helped to improve the quality of music. Currently over 60 pupils benefit from extra-curricular involvement in choir, guitar and recorder clubs. In addition, visiting musicians help to enhance the music curriculum.
- 182 **Physical education**
- 175 At both key stages, the pupils work at levels which are appropriate for their age. The great majority at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make generally satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Many of the older pupils make particularly good progress in swimming and a significant number achieve high standards in team games and athletics.
- 176 In dance and gymnastics, younger pupils make good use of space to move in different directions, changing speed and height effectively. They respond well to music, changing the pace of their movements to match the beat and rhythm. Many pupils work effectively on small apparatus, and are able to jump and balance appropriately. However, the landing skills of some are not well developed and they need additional help to enable them to improve this aspect of their work. Older pupils link actions together effectively and can transfer their work successfully from floor to apparatus.
- 177 In games, the pupils' skills are enhanced considerably by the wide range of extra-curricular activities which are available. Many of these involve competition against other schools, and this results in high standards of performance. In football, for example, the under-eleven boys team won the local school's league last year, and the current team have qualified as finalist for the Merseyside six-a-side competition to be held at the Anfield Stadium in the spring term. The under-ten boys team and the girls' football team have also won their leagues, and a number of individuals from both boys and girls' teams represent Liverpool City teams. In addition, the school's rugby team became city-champions last season, and two boys were selected for the Liverpool Primary Schools' cricket team.
- 178 At Key Stage 2, the great majority of pupils make good progress in developing their swimming skills and are able to swim at least 25 metres unaided before leaving the school at the end of Year 6. The pupils also engage in outdoor adventurous activities in the summer term during residential visits to the Colomendy Environmental Centre.
- 179 In athletics, which is timetabled during the summer term at Key Stage 2, many pupils achieve high standards. Again, their performance is enhanced by regular extra-curricular competitions against other schools. The girls' team recently won their league with two races remaining, and the boys' team are currently top of their league. In addition, a number of boys and girls became City champions last summer, and three of the school's pupils currently represent Liverpool in indoor athletic competitions.

- 180 The pupils respond positively in all aspects of physical education. From an early stage, they change without fuss into appropriate dress. They respond quickly to their teachers and pay close attention to their personal safety. The pupils display pride in their performance and achievements, and the standard of their behaviour is consistently good.
- 181 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Lessons are planned effectively to achieve a good balance between physical and intellectual development. Teachers are generally secure in the subject, although in some gymnastic lessons at Key Stage 1 insufficient attention is given to improving the quality of some aspects of the pupils' work, such as the technique for landing. The commitment and dedication shown by many teachers, in providing valuable extra-curricular opportunities for a substantial proportion of pupils, is exemplary.
- 182 The programme of work is well balanced and makes good provision for all pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving the quality of gymnastics, particularly at Key Stage 2.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

183 The inspection was carried out by five inspectors.

184 During the inspection:

- * 90 lessons were observed;
- * the behaviour of pupils was observed in lessons, playground, dining hall and when visiting another school;
- * assemblies were observed;
- * discussions were held with the headteacher and the co-ordinators for subjects and aspects and members of the governing body;
- * samples of pupils' work were examined in each year group;
- * pupils in each year group were heard to read;
- * the school development plan and policy documents were scrutinised;
- * teachers' planning, pupils' records and a sample of reports to parents were inspected;
- * attendance registers and budget figures were examined;
- * discussions were held with pupils, staff and parents;
- * the comments of parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspection and deputy were recorded. The views expressed in the questionnaires returned by parents were analysed;
- * the previous inspection report was examined.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	369	3	112	217
Nursery Unit/School	22.5	0	0	n/a

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	17.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked each week	182.5

Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	32

Average class size:	25
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Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99

	£
Total Income	729,963.06
Total Expenditure	675,217.07
Expenditure per pupil	1,560.91
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,956.30
Balance carried forward to next year	84,702.29

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	414
Number of questionnaires returned:	93

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	44	47	4	3	1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	57	37	1	4	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	23	45	18	10	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	37	53	6	3	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	42	44	5	6	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	40	52	4	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	43	43	8	3	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	35	48	3	11	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	47	34	13	6	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	35	43	7	12	3
My child(ren) like(s) school	60	34	4	1	1

Percentage of responses are rounded to the nearest integer, the sum may not = 100%
 Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns, excluding nil replies