

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. ANNE'S (STANLEY) JUNIOR MIXED AND
INFANT SCHOOL**

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104622

Headteacher: Mr. P. Bolger

Reporting inspector: Mr. C. Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 27th – 31st March 2000

Inspection number: 191587

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and Infant

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Prescott Road
Old Swan
Liverpool

Postcode: L13 3BT

Telephone number: 0151 228 1506

Fax number: 0151 228 1506

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rev. Myles Davies

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. C. Kessell	Registered inspector	Mathematics	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Art	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Physical education	Teaching and learning
			Leadership and management
			Key Issues for action
Mrs. J. Moorhouse	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs. E. Charlesworth	Team inspector	Music	
Mr. J. Collins	Team inspector	Science	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	
Mr. T. Elston	Team inspector	Geography	
		History	
		Special educational needs	
Mrs. E. Walker	Team inspector	Design and technology	
Mr. M. Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	English	
		Information technology	
		Equality of opportunity	
		Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections

Grasshoppers
1 Anglesey Close
Chasetown
Burntwood
Staffordshire
WS7 8XA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 390 full-time pupils and 57 part-time pupils. It is above average in size. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average and the percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is high. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is average. Attainment of the pupils when they start school is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school that provides a friendly, caring environment for its pupils. The teachers are hardworking and the pupils enjoy their work. There is a commitment to high standards and continued improvement amongst the governors and staff. The school is very well managed, extremely effective and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Consistently good teaching enables pupils to learn well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. Behaviour is very good.
- Attendance is excellent.
- Assessment is used well to monitor pupils' achievement.
- Standards in English and mathematics are above average in Key Stage 1 and above average in science at Key Stage 2.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is excellent.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology in Key Stage 2.
- The organisation of special educational needs provision.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has developed very well since the last inspection in February 1997. Opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research have improved significantly, particularly in areas of the curriculum like geography and history. Evidence from inspection provided some good examples of pupils using libraries and CD-ROMs for research. The school is now providing more challenging work to the most able pupils through a number of strategies. This is more effective in English and mathematics. Dinner supervisors have received additional training to support their role. They are fully integrated into the life of the school and play a valuable part in looking after the pupils. Procedures for preparing a statement of special educational pupils are now clear and well established.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	C	D	B
mathematics	B	E	E	C
science	A	C	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Results of the 1999 national tests indicated that standards in English were below average, in mathematics well below average and in science average, when compared with all schools. However, when compared with schools of a similar nature standards were above average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science. Evidence from inspection would indicate that current standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards in information technology are below average. There are high expectations in the school and pupils' achievements are very well monitored but there is also evidence to indicate that there can be significant differences in year groups particularly in Key Stage 2 where pupils' mobility is quite high. The school has set realistic, but challenging targets in English and mathematics for the year 2000.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	All pupils demonstrate a very positive attitude to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in the classroom, in the playground and when moving around the school is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good overall. Pupils enjoy responsibilities and are very reliable. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is excellent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Although teaching was judged to be good overall, twenty two per cent of teaching is very good or better. The majority of lessons are very well organised and the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Pupils work at a good pace and make good progress. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good with literacy and

numeracy skills being taught well. The teaching of French is consistently good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a broad, balanced and well planned curriculum that enables pupils of all ages to learn effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good, well-written individual education plans, which provide clear targets towards which pupils can aim. A weakness in the school's provision is the withdrawal of pupils from subjects such as mathematics for reading.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although the school has a higher than average number of pupils with English as an additional language, most of the pupils have reached appropriate levels in their English. Additional support is provided through special educational needs support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. Moral and social education is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	St. Anne's Primary School takes very good care of its pupils.

The parents' views of the school are very positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school has a very caring ethos where all staff work very well together. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by his senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the school. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and know the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Data and assessment information are used very effectively. The school is always looking to improve and move forward. There is no complacency.
The strategic use of resources	Staff, time and resources are used very well. The school is always striving to achieve best value for money.

The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers. The accommodation is a bright, cheerful learning environment. The building is kept in immaculate condition by the hardworking caretaker and cleaning staff. Learning resources for the pupils are very good.

The curriculum and teaching are well monitored. This has a significant impact on the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has a friendly atmosphere • The accommodation is being constantly improved • Pupils are well cared for • There are high standards of behaviour • Pupils become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about pupils' progress • The amount of work pupils have to do at home

The above views are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by 19 parents and from the 156 responses to the parents' questionnaire. Evidence from inspection supports the parents' positive views. Pupils' reports evaluate progress well and useful information is provided about the pupils' personal and social development. The school homework policy is clear and structured; and homework is set in accordance with its guidelines.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils enter the school with a range of ability, but with that of the majority being below average. This is confirmed by the school's baseline assessment and inspection findings. The children achieve good progress with their personal and social development. They follow instructions extremely well and are sensible as they move around the school. Pupils show good concentration over extended periods of time and settle to their tasks quickly. They listen carefully to teachers and support staff and to each other. Relationships are very good. The children's language skills are developed effectively. They express themselves well and are able to communicate their ideas. By the time they are five many children can write their own names and copy simple words and phrases. Books are handled appropriately and some children are established on the early stages of reading. Children in the Nursery develop a sense of number patterns and sequences through daily counting routines. This is developed further in the Reception classes as pupils start the National Numeracy Strategy. Children are able to recognise numbers up to 10 and many of the higher attaining pupils extend this to 20. Their mathematical knowledge and skills are developed well. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They use the computer well and experience a full range of other activities. Through the secure outdoor play area and physical education lessons in the hall, pupils show confidence in their movement and play activities. When given opportunities to use appropriate tools their manipulative skills are well developed. Children work with a range of different media such as paints and pastels and much of their work is colourful and imaginative.

2. National test results for 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards achieved were average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools standards were above average for these three areas of the curriculum. The percentage of pupils achieving level 3 or above in writing and mathematics was above the national average. The 1999 results show a decline from 1998 but have improved significantly in reading and writing from 1997. Evidence from inspection would indicate that there are significant differences in the pupil cohorts and that the variation in results is not due to pupils' underachievement. National test results in 1999 for Key Stage 2 showed that standards were below the national average in English, well below the national average in mathematics and broadly in line with the national average for science. When compared with similar schools standards were above average in English, in line with the national average for mathematics and well above average in science. When all subjects are taken together standards are above average when compared to similar schools. Compared with the results from 1998 there have been improvements in mathematics and science although the English results were quite not as good. The school has a very good understanding of what it does and pupils' results and progress over time are rigorously monitored and evaluated. The school has worked hard to initiate the National Numeracy Strategy so that the inconsistency between the results in mathematics and English and science can be addressed in Key Stage 2. There is considerable pupil-mobility in the school, particularly in Key Stage 2 and comparisons between results in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are not necessarily accurate guides to pupils' actual achievement. Evidence from inspection indicates that the school knows its pupils very well and is not complacent about the results that pupils achieve. For example, Years 3 and 5 are recognised as having a higher percentage of lower attaining pupils and extra teaching and non-teaching support has been

allocated to these year groups. There are high expectations and all pupils are expected to achieve their maximum potential. Year 6 pupils receive 'booster' classes both during and after school in a continued attempt to raise standards and in Years 5 and 6 pupils are put into ability groups for English and mathematics. The school has set realistic and appropriately challenging targets for the Year 2000 in English and mathematics. At Key Stage 2 the school's performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science broadly reflects the national trend.

3. There is occasional minor variation of standards between boys and girls; for example, the English results in the national tests for 1999. However, over time, there is no significant trend. The school's assessment data and test results are analysed for differences in achievement by gender and ability. The school plans action in response to this analysis for instance, by increasing the emphasis on the teaching of writing.

4. Evidence from inspection including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that standards are above average in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1, and average in science. At Key Stage 2 standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Although pupils are achieving appropriate standards in information technology at Key Stage 1, standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 2.

5. Pupils in Key Stage 1 listen well to their teachers and peers. They enjoy talking and holding discussions about the work that they are doing. Pupils talk sensibly to teachers and visitors to the school and use appropriate vocabulary for their age. They read accurately, with many pupils reading with expression. Different strategies are used to cope with unfamiliar words and many pupils are successfully linking their writing skills to their reading. Pupils write well with common words spelt accurately and punctuation being used. Much of the writing is very imaginative. In mathematics pupils have a good understanding of place value, recognise number patterns and can complete sequences accurately. They use non-standard measures to see what objects are 'bigger than' but are also familiar with standard measures such as metres for length and 'half-past' for time. Two-dimensional shapes and their properties are identified and simple graphs are constructed as part of a data-handling exercise. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge to solve simple problems. They have an appropriate understanding of scientific knowledge and the skills associated with scientific investigation. Pupils understand the natural world and can identify the main parts of a flower. They test materials to find which make the best waterproof hats and sort materials according to their properties.

6. At Key Stage 2, many pupils can speak articulately and confidently but there are a significant number of pupils whose speaking skills are more limited. Pupils listen well and act appropriately on instructions. Standards in reading are average with pupils reading text fluently and then explaining the content of the book. Pupils are good at re-drafting their writing using a neat, joined script. A majority of pupils have a secure understanding of the rules of number and use this information successfully to solve problems. They are able to make sensible estimations of answers, identify strategies for solving written problems and then check their calculations using a calculator. Pupils understand the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. They conduct scientific experiments and most pupils know that materials can be classified as solids, liquids or gases. Pupils study forces and their effects and produce graphs and tables to present their findings

7. Overall, pupils achieve well through the school particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The previous inspection identified the need to ensure that appropriately challenging work was given to the most able pupils and this has been well addressed in English and mathematics. In these subjects higher attaining pupils learn as effectively as the other pupils. However, this practice is not always consistent across other subjects of the curriculum, for example science, and this impacts on the overall quality of learning for all ability groups. Achievement in information technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 where pupils have access to the new computer suite. Progress is good in the non-core subjects of art, design and technology and history. The quality of learning in geography, music and physical education is sound. There are no subjects in the school where pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, and achieve in line with their abilities. They make good progress in reading, where they have the benefit of support from classroom assistants in the literacy hour and well planned reading activities when withdrawn for specialist work in small groups. Their learning in mathematics is often good because activities are carefully planned for different ability groups. However, progress is more limited in other areas of the curriculum and sometimes mathematics, because pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for reading and then from a number of subjects and struggle to catch up with their peers particularly when they miss the lesson's introduction.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. Sixty-nine per cent of parents replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their child liked school. In all situations, a significant majority of pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and interest in what they are being taught. Pupils are capable of careful presentation of their work and handling resources sensibly. There are a very small number of pupils who are not attentive or motivated by learning experiences.

10. Pupils' behaviour in the classroom, in the playground and when moving around the school is very good. Ninety-five per cent of parents replying to the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed that behaviour in the school was good. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting had no concerns about behaviour and felt that rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour were handled immediately. This view was substantiated during the inspection when the Headteacher took prompt action and involved parents in handling inappropriate behaviour. One pupil was excluded on a temporary exclusion in the last school year.

11. A lunchtime discipline policy is used by lunchtime staff and is an extension to the assertive discipline policy which is operated by the whole school. There is a consistent approach amongst staff when handling incidents of inappropriate behaviour and a constant reinforcement of class rules particularly in relation to not calling out answers to questions, the importance of listening to others and taking turns. Good behaviour is appropriately rewarded through individual and class awards and with team points. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting commented on this reward system and identified it as making a positive contribution to the personal development of their children. Pupils have been involved in writing the school's mission statement and aims, classroom and playground rules. All classrooms have appropriately worded rules displayed which, for older pupils, contain details of rewards and sanctions.

12. Pupils have continued to show initiative and handle responsibilities conscientiously as was reported at the time of the last inspection. In addition, during this inspection inspectors saw evidence of opportunities to undertake research and develop independent learning skills. Pupils in Year 6 take care of younger children, particularly in the dining room and help with the organisation of activities during lunchtime play. In all year groups children are register monitors and have responsibilities within the classroom. Pupils handle these responsibilities reliably and efficiently and they make a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development. A significantly large majority of parents replying to the questionnaire felt that the school helps their child become mature and responsible.

13. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils form good relationships with each other, with teachers and with other adults. Throughout the inspection examples were seen of pupils' working together collaboratively and of their respect for each other and their teachers. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting commented that children had become more respectful towards the staff and each other. Pupils celebrate other's success, both that of individuals and of teams. In a design and technology lesson, pupils spontaneously applauded the class teacher for her success when demonstrating the main activity.

14. Attendance at the school is excellent. There are a small number of persistent absences but these are being followed up by the school's education welfare officer who visit the school regularly. There are no unexplained or unauthorised absences. Registers are completed each morning and afternoon and conform with statutory requirements. There was no evidence of the erosion of teaching time through the overrunning of registration as reported on at the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good overall with 74% of lessons being judged good or better. Twenty per cent of lessons were very good, with one French lesson judged as excellent. Twenty five per cent of lessons were satisfactory and one lesson was judged as poor. During the previous inspection teaching was judged to be a strength of the school and it has remained so. The percentage of very good teaching has improved since the last inspection. Although good and very good teaching was seen across the school the proportions of very good teaching were higher in Nursery and Reception classes and in Key Stage 2. The good and very good teaching enables pupils to learn well throughout the school and across the curriculum.

16. The previous inspection identified most teaching as being characterised by effective planning, good and very good classroom management and very good standards of discipline. These high standards have been maintained. Literacy and numeracy are taught consistently well. Teachers plan very effectively against the national frameworks for these subjects and conduct lessons to the recommended structures and timing. Teachers' subject knowledge, including the development of basic skills, in both literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers plan well for the pupils with different ability in literacy and numeracy although this is not so consistent across all subjects of the curriculum.

17. The majority of teachers are very good at managing the pupils so that they respond very positively to the experiences and opportunities provided. In the one poor lesson, behaviour management was inconsistent; this eventually led to the pace of the lesson becoming unsatisfactory as pupils shouted out answers or failed to work appropriately in their activity groups. Pupils did not learn in this lesson. However, most pupils respect their teachers and are genuinely valued in return. The majority of lessons are very purposeful where all pupils are engaged in learning all of the time. Teachers consistently share lesson

objectives with the pupils particularly in literacy and numeracy. This is good practice and ensures that pupils know what is expected and on what to focus. It also works well in other subjects. For example, in a very good Year 5 physical education lesson the teacher ensured that all pupils knew exactly what they were going to achieve during the lesson and how it was linked to other areas of learning. This enabled the pupils to produce work of the highest standards as they took part in Tudor dances.

18. In all of the better lessons teachers' good subject knowledge provides inspiration to the pupils, such as in history in Year 5 where pupils discuss Victorian towns or in an excellent Reception French lesson. Teachers are good at questioning pupils to check on their understanding and promote further thought such as in Year 2 numeracy lesson on place value. High expectations of pupils in terms of what they can do and achieve are also a feature of many lessons. All pupils are expected to participate and they have a clear understanding about the work are doing. However, in some lessons which are otherwise satisfactory, the pace of working is not as dynamic as the good and very good lessons and there are shortcomings in the amount of work pupils are expected to do, particularly the higher attaining pupils. This was the case in some science lessons observed. Work is marked consistently and all classrooms display a marking policy. Some teachers provided good information to pupils through their marking which enables and supports pupils on to the next stage of learning. Many teachers try and mark with the pupils particularly in literacy and numeracy.

19. Teachers often work well with classroom assistants to provide useful support to pupils. This is particularly effective in lessons where the classroom assistants had been provided task sheets that identify what work they are going to do with specific groups of pupils. In a Year 1 art lesson a classroom assistant was effectively deployed monitoring the behaviour of an individual pupil and this was good practice. On rare occasions not all classroom assistants are so effectively engaged particularly during teacher introductions to lessons.

20. Teachers take good care to give equal attention to girls and boys, in their relationships and questioning during lessons. The expertise for dealing with pupils who speak English as an additional language is sound. These pupils are given appropriate support to work towards their individual education plans. The specialist teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress towards their targets. Overall, teachers have a good awareness of pupils' difficulties and provide work that is generally well matched to their needs as identified in their individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported by classroom assistants, who have a good knowledge of pupils' needs, but sometimes this support focuses too long on one pupil and leaves others without help.

21. Pupils acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills at a good rate. In most classes they are extremely interested in their work and engage readily in lessons. They become fully involved and are very keen to complete tasks and present their work during plenary sessions. Pupils participate enthusiastically in discussions and debates and are quite happy to explain their thinking or ideas to teachers, their peers or visitors to the school. Good concentration is consistent all of the time. In most subjects pupils produce plenty of work and they are provided with good opportunities to research work of their own. For example, Year 4 pupils spend time researching topics using the library or CD-ROM. This enables the pupils to develop good research skills and to work independently. This was

a

key issue during the previous inspection. Regular and relevant homework is used to support work across all of the curriculum.

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

22. The curriculum for children under five incorporates all areas of learning and enables all pupils to make good progress towards achieving the Desirable Learning Outcomes. It provides a secure basis for the National Curriculum work. Strong emphasis is given to the development of pupils' language and number work and their personal and social skills. The other areas of learning, such as physical, creative development and a knowledge and understanding of the world are given appropriate time and planning. These experiences are successful in promoting children's knowledge, skills and understanding across the full range of all areas of learning.

23. The school offers a broad, balanced and well planned curriculum which promotes the progress of pupils of all ages and abilities very effectively. It is enhanced by the teaching of French throughout the school. The National Numeracy and Literacy strategies have been implemented successfully to the benefit of all pupils. The teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy is good overall. The planned curriculum includes personal, social and health education, sex education and awareness of drugs. Additionally, despite the limitations of time, the school has maintained all foundation subjects and religious education as quality learning experiences. The allocation of time to all subject areas enables pupils to build more effectively on their previous learning and maintain their developing knowledge.

24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This is a reflection of the findings of the last report. However, the policy of withdrawing these pupils in small groups for extra support is affecting their entitlement to a full curriculum. Sometimes these pupils are taken out of many different lessons to have extra support for reading which affects their progress and continuity of learning in other areas of the curriculum. The curriculum for higher attaining pupils is enhanced by extra support at various times during the week when they can extend and develop their learning at a deeper level. All pupils are valued as individuals whatever their level of attainment.

25. Given the restrictions of the site, the school offers a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities which enhances the curriculum for a considerable number of pupils. For example, the lunch-time chess club was seen with nearly 20 pupils involved, and the art club is over-subscribed with a waiting list of pupils eager to take part. The school has a strong choir, of which it is justly proud; they take part in a number of activities within the local community. Sporting links are established with other primary school in football and netball.

26. The school has good links with the outside community. From the Early Years, opportunities are taken to take pupils into the outside world. The younger children in the Early Years visit the local park as part of their science studies and visit the local cathedrals and mosque. Year 1 pupils have attended a baptism service and Year 5 pupils take part in a service at St. Anne's Church every other week to which the local community are invited. Residential visits to North Wales have been held in the past for Year 6 pupils but were not taken last year due to a steep rise in costs. Pupils have visited a local 'Victorian' school for the day and dressed in period costume. They have visited Hilbre Island on the estuary to look at the contrasting environments and its associated wildlife as part of their science studies. Key Stage 2 pupils have had a 'poetry day' with a local visiting poet, who proved

most successful in stimulating pupils' writing. The school is proud of its involvement with the Parents School Partnership which meets in school. This offers courses for parents about aspects of their children's education as well as personal development courses. Parents are also taking computer courses in the new information technology suite. Other links are with the Hope College from which many students are taken for teaching experience. Good links with the secondary school and other primary schools in its cluster have been established and the school has been part of a bid for financial support through a mini educational zone. Secondary school staff visit school prior to pupils moving and they in turn visit their respective secondary schools. Visits are made by staff to local 'Toddler' groups and the Abercrombie Nursery to speak to prospective parents before their children start school.

27. There has been an improvement in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education since the previous inspection. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Through a comprehensive policy, teachers are alerted to the need to plan for the many opportunities offered through the curriculum to reflect on the wonders of life. Expression of feelings is encouraged particularly in art and music, and through the 'Millennium Wish' that pupils made. A period of reflection and prayer in assembly enables pupils to reflect on the needs of others. There are reminders of the Christian faith and of other religions in the displays in the entrance hall and around the school.

28. Moral education is excellent. There is a clear code of conduct that the pupils help to form and it is clearly displayed in classrooms and in the playground. Teachers and pupils alike are consistent in the way they apply this and pupils can be heard reminding one another of how they should behave. Pupils are motivated to do well by the rewards they receive for their effort and achievement.

29. Provision for social education is excellent. There are many opportunities to learn how to work together in the classroom and outside. Adults set a good example by playing with the children in the playground and taking them on trips. Year 6 regularly visit a residential centre where they enjoy the space and open air of the Welsh countryside. The curriculum is enriched by, for instance visits to Croxteth House to experience life in the Victorian age and Chester Zoo for a closer look at animal life. Certificates for achievement are presented regularly in Praise Assembly; pupils learn how to accept rewards with poise and dignity.

30. The cultural life of the school is very good. The rich heritage of Liverpool is celebrated with photographic displays and in English lessons where dialect is compared with standard English. In art, pupils look at the work of artists from Aboriginal art to Picasso and Monet. In music, pupils visit concerts and are familiar with a variety of music from the Beatles to music for worship as well as the music of other countries. The teaching of French to all pupils also enhances their cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting agreed that staff have the welfare of pupils at heart. There is a named child protection officer and the school's policy is in line with local procedures. Teaching, non-teaching and lunchtime staff are aware of personnel and procedures involved. Three members of staff are qualified first aiders and all staff have received basic first aid training. All necessary procedures are in place to deal with minor incidents and accidents. Arrangements and procedures for the conduct of educational visits comply with local authority guidelines. Although the governing body has not designated responsibility for health and safety to one particular member, the group as a whole is aware

of its responsibilities in this area. The school provides a safe environment for its pupils and staff. However, the school would acknowledge the need to review the unsatisfactory practice seen during the inspection of pupils moving to the hall in bare feet along the main corridor. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting felt that the security of the school had improved.

32. During the inspection no incidents of bullying or harassment were seen by inspectors and none were reported. An isolated incident was mentioned at the parents' meeting but said to have been dealt with promptly and appropriately by the Headteacher. Inspectors judged that the ethos of the school would ensure that pupils would be confident to report bullying and the school's consistent response would be effective in eliminating it.

33. Supervision during lunchtime is satisfactorily organised through a rota drawn up by the member of staff responsible for lunchtime management. Midday supervisors have opportunities to meet with staff to be updated on school procedure and policies and informally on a regular basis to discuss concerns and issues. During the previous inspection issues related to lunchtime staff and their relationship with pupils were identified. Since that time the profile of lunchtime staff has been raised within the school. They wear name badges and a uniform and are able to award team points for good behaviour. Inspectors could not identify a disparity between the politeness and courtesy shown to staff and visitors and that afforded to lunchtime supervisors.

34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good. Absence, and any reason for it, is carefully monitored. Parents are made aware of their responsibilities through the school prospectus, including the importance of punctuality. Good class attendance is rewarded at the weekly praise assembly and individually at the end of the academic year.

35. Throughout the school very good procedures are in place for assessing for children's attainment in all areas of learning. Pupils are encouraged to develop their social skills and to become integrated into the school process. Records are regularly updated and detailed information is recorded during classroom observations. In the Nursery information is used consistently to develop the areas of learning for individuals. The records inform assessments when a pupil enters a Reception class and are used to assist pupils who will need additional support in order to develop their skills.

36. The school has developed its assessment and recording procedures to very good effect. The records are consistent, well maintained and inform all areas of a pupils' development whilst they are in the school. They are regularly monitored and senior managers are able to identify where resources and teaching should be directed in order to support and improve the quality of learning for the pupil. Assessments are regularly updated and used when developing future teaching plans. They are very good tools with which to monitor the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.

37. Continual monitoring and interrogation of individual pupils' targets, are shared with other teachers and senior managers so that progress can be measured at various times during the academic year, or from the point the pupil entered the school. The information informs the planning process for groups of pupils.

38. National tests and teacher assessments are used together in order to measure progress against pupils' targets. This information is used in discussion with all parties. The annual report for parents in the year 2000 will include targets.

39. The pupil profile is comprehensive, and includes elements for focussing on pupils' individuals needs. This is a good feature especially for pupils' who have a special educational needs or for whom is English is an additional language.

40. The system is regularly reviewed during the planning process and teachers receive support and additional training in order to develop their skills in the process. The system is well managed by the co-ordinator.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. The school has gained the support of a significant majority of parents and the member of staff responsible for home-school links communicates with them effectively.

42. Almost 50% of parents replying to the questionnaire strongly agree that the school works closely with parents. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting found a consistent attitude amongst staff in respect of their handling and responses to concerns and problems. Staff make themselves available to parents on a day to day basis and there are unlimited opportunities for listening to the complaints, concerns and suggestions of parents. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school is satisfactory. Approximately 25 adults help in the school regularly. During the inspection, a number of examples of parents and other adults hearing children reading was seen. Parents have been involved in topic related lessons such as Egyptian dancing and caring for pets, besides helping with sewing and information technology. A Parents' Association is well supported and runs fund raising events which make good profits. These have helped to provide resources for the school and enhance the environment.

43. Two parents' meetings during the school year provide parents with detailed information of their children's progress. Reports scrutinised during the inspection evaluated academic progress well and the record of personal progress contained useful information about each child's personal and social development. However, topic and curriculum related information does not seem to be distributed to parents. Despite this, parents at the pre-inspection meeting appeared to be well informed about what is happening in the school and satisfied with the education their children are receiving. They felt that the information they receive has improved since the time of the last inspection.

44. Although almost 50 per cent of replies to the parents' questionnaire indicated satisfaction on being kept informed on pupils' progress, 15 per cent of replies disagreed with this statement. At the pre-inspection meeting one parent felt that homework needed more structure and a timetable. Fifteen per cent of replies to the parents' questionnaire expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of work their child had to do at home. However, inspectors found the homework policy clear and structured and homework being set in accordance with its guidelines. Half of the parents responding to the questionnaire were satisfied with the amount of work pupils were expected to do at home and inspectors agree with the view that arrangements are satisfactory.

45. There is a well written and informative school brochure. Letters to parents are good in relation to content and presentation as is the twice termly newsletter. The school's involvement in the Parents School Partnership programme run by a local further education college enables parents and other adults to access academic and recreational educational opportunities. A room is set aside for their use and groups meet daily. A mother and toddler group use the room twice weekly. These are very positive initiatives.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by a strong team of teaching, and non-teaching staff. There is clear direction in the school and high expectations. Teachers' morale is high and great efforts are made to ensure that all members of staff are aware of what is going on in the school. The daily briefing meeting that is held before school, emphasises the importance of communication in the school. The school management structure which includes a senior management team of the deputy-headteacher and the teachers with responsibility for Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and band co-ordinators, who are responsible for two years groups, allows effective delegation. One of the outstanding features of the school management is the rigour that accompanies everything the school does. If a weakness or development-need is identified it will be addressed. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is very good. Curriculum planning is monitored by the subject co-ordinators and senior management team and the headteacher looks at pupils books in the core subjects once a term. Teaching is monitored through literacy and numeracy by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators and feedback is given to teachers. All teachers produce targets in English and mathematics for the pupils in their class and progress towards these targets is regularly monitored. This process, which was started at the beginning of the current academic year, focuses teachers on the performance of their pupils and contributes to the overall drive and commitment to raise standards. The headteacher has a significant presence around the school. He is available during lunchtimes and school breaks and this contributes to the high standards of behaviour.

47. The school development plan is an impressive document that has clear objectives and identifies development planning and strategy for the next five years. Also included are subject co-ordinator mini-action plans that focus on the immediate academic year. These include targets, success criteria, costings and training needs. The overall aim of the document is to improve the quality of teaching and learning. It is well monitored by the senior management team, the governors and individual subject managers.

48. The governing body is extremely supportive of the school and staff and fulfils all of the statutory requirements. They know the school well, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are well informed about what is actually happening in the school. They are a well organised body with a number of committees that support the smooth running of the school. Many of the governors visit the school regularly, often to help in classrooms or take part in other activities such as hearing pupils read. They are clear about the standards the school achieves and also aware and supportive of the strategies used for improving standards, for example, grouping pupils in Years 5 and 6 for English and mathematics, according to ability. They also have a good understanding of how the school performs when compared to similar schools, and are proud of the achievements. The governors have worked very hard to improve the environment of the school for the pupils. Evidence from inspection would indicate that they have been very successful at this aim over a number of years. Building improvements have dominated much of the budget setting processes for the governors and along with the headteacher they are determined to get at least good value for money and manage resources efficiently. An initial budget is drawn up by the school administrative officer so that priorities can be identified in relation to the school development plan. Budget management is well delegated to subject co-ordinators who have their own budgets based on their action plans and to band co-ordinators who take responsibility for ordering the resources required by their year groups for the academic year ahead. This process ensures the efficient use of resources and that they are accessible to those classes and teachers that need them.

49. The number of teaching staff is larger than usually found, since the school has two additional teachers. This is an example of good strategy in targeting staff to specific areas of need, and is in line with best value principles. There is a good range of experience, and of gender and age balance amongst the staff. Their qualifications have been upgraded by well targeted in-service courses to match their assigned leadership roles. Support staff, too, are mostly well deployed in helping teachers to raise standards. The midday staff work more effectively than at the previous inspection, after a dedicated training course. They have a repertoire of games to play with pupils and contribute significantly to the calm atmosphere at lunchtimes. The school office is the good humoured hub of school life, and a sterling support to the headteacher. Kitchen staff cope well with the busy traffic of the dinner queue. The varied and healthy menu is appreciated by pupils, but did not rise to scouse on National Scouse Day!

50. Accommodation is used flexibly to enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. Teachers have worked hard to create a bright, cheerful learning environment, with effective displays celebrating pupils' academic and creative work. The building is kept in sparkling condition by a committed caretaker and cleaning staff. The limitations of the hall for physical education remain, but the dangerous pillars referred to in the previous inspection, are now well padded.

51. Learning resources overall are very good and well used to bring practical experience into lessons. They have a considerable impact on effective teaching and learning. The computer suite is a valuable recent addition, but there are signs that the classroom computers are becoming insufficiently used as lessons transfer to the new facilities.

52. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well trained for her responsibilities. She provides good support to colleagues, helping, for example, with the writing of pupils' individual education plans, and keeping parents well-informed of their child's progress. The co-ordinator has provided staff with useful training in the assessment of pupils' needs and the setting of targets. Following concerns expressed in the previous inspection, the co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the procedures for pupils who may need statements of their special needs, and, as a result, these are now clear and well established. Funding for special educational needs is used appropriately. It is school policy that five per cent of each subject budget is spent on special educational needs.

53. Although the school's expenditure per pupil is slightly above average, against rising standards, the consistently good teaching, the pupils very positive attitudes and behaviour and the very effective management, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The inspection team recognises the school's continued drive to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning, but to improve further the standards achieved and the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise attainment in information technology in Key Stage 2 by:
 - Identifying how information technology will be used to support other areas of the curriculum;
(Paragraphs: 70, 103, 104, 106)
 - Ensuring the progressive development of information technology skills;
(Paragraphs: 104, 106)
 - Continuing to develop resources to ensure that all elements of the subject can be taught.
(Paragraph: 103)

- (2) Review the arrangements to withdraw pupils with special educational needs so that an appropriate balance is drawn between the benefits of withdrawal and pupils' entitlement to the full curriculum
(Paragraphs: 8, 24, 106)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	95
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	21	52	25	0	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28.5	390
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	184

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	70

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	23

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	28	32	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	27
	Girls	26	31	30
	Total	48	55	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (92)	92 (96)	95 (96)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	28	27
	Girls	27	30	30
	Total	49	58	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (92)	97 (96)	95 (96)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	16	23
	Girls	22	19	27
	Total	40	35	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (66)	58 (38)	83 (59)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	15	22
	Girls	22	19	27
	Total	40	34	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (66)	57 (39)	82 (59)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	28
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	0
White	365
Any other minority ethnic group	22

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	27.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.5

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	12

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	698 500
Total expenditure	689 868
Expenditure per pupil	1 666
Balance brought forward from previous year	47 022
Balance carried forward to next year	55 653

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	447
Number of questionnaires returned	156

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	41	3	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	40	15	1	1
The teaching is good.	71	23	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	33	15	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	24	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	35	10	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	69	25	4	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	31	3	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	28	14	2	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. Children join the school in the September before their fifth birthday. The school also has an attached Nursery unit which accommodates 60 children on a part-time basis for morning or afternoon sessions. Admission to both Nursery and Reception is staggered and pre-admission arrangements incorporate home visits if required and half and full day visits for children and parents. This allows links to be established between home and school and children settle quickly into the routines of the school. This helps them to feel secure and confident. The Parent School Partnership organised through the school and the Local Education Authority plays an important part in this process. At the time of the inspection there were 57 children in the Nursery and 28 children under the age of five in the two Reception classes. They are assessed in the first half term of full time school but the Nursery unit is also using a trial assessment system from the Local Authority this year. A wide range of attainment is represented in the school's intake and this year pupils' attainment on entry is below that expected nationally for children of this age. Boys and girls of all backgrounds settle well and make good progress. To support their work teachers in the Early Years classes have devised their own set of learning objectives for children under five which supplement and extend the Desirable Learning Outcomes, and which they feel are more detailed and relevant to their children. In aspects of creative and physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, they successfully achieve the standards as set out in the Desirable Learning Outcomes. By the time they are five, in personal and social development, mathematics, language and literacy, many children reach the standards expected of them.

Personal and social development

56. Children are confident and settle well in to the routines of their classes. They show a degree of independence in the way they respond to the activities they undertake and other daily routines. For example, when changing for outdoor play and physical education, they do so with a minimum of adult help. They listen to their teachers and respond readily to their questions when working as a group. Teachers and other support staff provide very good role models for the children and take all appropriate opportunities to reinforce the social skills of co-operation and learning. Many children show good concentration over extended periods of time as they settle to their tasks. They take turns fairly and show consideration for others, as when one boy in a Reception class told the teacher it should be 'the birthday girl' who should lead the line out for play. The majority of children handle equipment and books carefully and with respect. They follow instructions well and are sensible when moving around the school as was observed when they went to the hall for a physical education lesson. The majority of children are well motivated and their behaviour in class and around the school is very good.

Language and literacy

57. From the earliest opportunities, children's speaking and listening skills are well developed. They learn in the Nursery to enjoy stories and rhymes which are used very effectively to gather children together for whole group sessions such as calling the register. When they arrive all children in the Nursery take their own name card and put it in the post box. This has been an effective way of teaching them to recognise their own name. Many have learned that words and pictures convey meaning and some are well established on the early stages of reading. One child, for example, could identify the title, author and illustrator of a book from the front cover. In the Reception classes, they work alongside the older children and are confident and capable in their literacy work. They practice letter

formation, simple words and can use a picture dictionary to find words beginning with a given letter. By the time they are five, many children can write their own names and copy write simple words and phrases. Within the class group they express themselves well and with an extending range of vocabulary. In literacy sessions they can communicate their ideas simply and effectively. There are many strengths in the teaching and learning in this aspect of provision. Teachers plan well and support staff and resources are used very well to enhance learning. Careful monitoring of progress is carried out in all classes to ensure that children are ready for the next stage of learning. Children are successfully introduced to the literacy hour and follow-up activities promote their interest and enjoyment of books. At present there are a number of higher attaining children who are already working in level 1 of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

Mathematics

58. In the Nursery children develop a sense of number, order and sequence through daily counting routines such as registration when they count with the teacher the number present and absent. This is further developed in Reception classes through the more structured sessions of the National Numeracy Strategy. The majority of children make good progress in learning to understand mathematical language such as 'more', 'less', 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'. They learn to sort by colours in the Nursery and this is extended to sorting by shape in Reception. Teachers and support staff in all classes plan very activities carefully targeted to the age and abilities of their children which help to develop their basic number skills well. They record their progress in a most comprehensive and detailed manner which helps them to know when children are ready for the next stage of learning. By the age of five, most children can recognise and sequence numbers up to 10, and a few of the higher attaining children can extend this to 20. Children demonstrate a wide range of attainment, for example a few can add numbers within 10 while others are able to make sets of the same objects of the same colour. Currently, a number of children in Year 1 classes are already operating within level 1 of the National Numeracy Strategy. The overall quality and provision of learning in mathematics is good and all opportunities are taken to extend children's awareness. Reception class planning has an appropriate emphasis on language associated with counting and many activities promote this effectively. Teachers and support staff in the Nursery use a number of counting songs and rhymes to motivate and interest children in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Children acquire a knowledge and understanding of their world through a range of activities before the age of five. In the Nursery they were seen exploring materials through taste and smell and have planted bean seeds in Reception in their topic on growth. They were introduced to change and personal growth when a parent brought in her young baby to be bathed in the class. It was particularly noticeable how children by the end of the session were appreciative of the need to be quiet and handle the baby gently and with care. They were able to talk about this later and discuss among themselves the reasons for this. Through the 'play' activities they learn about the properties of sand, water and play dough and learn to use appropriate vocabulary such as 'rough' and 'smooth'. By the age of five many have become very competent in the use of the computer, and can use a mouse to move graphics around the screen in art, number and language programs. The planned activities that promote children's knowledge in this aspect of their learning are well resourced and all children are able to experience the full range of the activities. Good use is made of their own experiences to relate this learning to situations they know and can appreciate. For example, good use is made of the children themselves in a topic on 'Growing'. Children in Year 1 experience the more structured range of topics that introduce them to other areas of learning such as geography and history through a well organised and well planned series of topics.

Physical development

60. Nursery children have a secure outdoor play area which is used on a regular basis. However, due to its unsuitable surface they are restricted to only being able to use large wheeled toys and have no access to climbing frames or similar equipment. In the Nursery they are given opportunities to use large and small construction kits which develop their manipulative skills well. When required to use scissors they do so competently and safely. Such activities and others such as when children practice pencil control and handwriting skills are well planned and monitored by staff. Children enjoy physical education lessons in the hall and demonstrate confidence in jumping and moving about. This they do with a good awareness of space and the movement of others.

Creative development

61. Children under five join in and sing along with a wide range of songs and rhymes. In a music lesson they were observed matching the sound to a number of instruments and describing the sounds they made. It was a well structured lesson that effectively developed their previous learning. The quality of music teaching seen was of a high standard. Children express themselves with confidence in paint as seen in their self-portraits. Most children have explored a number of different types of media, such as paint, crayon and pastels in their art work. Their work is used in the many colourful and imaginative displays in the classrooms and corridors that are such a feature of the school. Nursery children enjoy role-play opportunities and use these to develop their language imaginatively.

ENGLISH

62. The results for the Key Stage 1 in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were above average. Pupils achieved above the national average in writing for level 2C and above. In reading pupils achieved above the national average for the higher level 3, although overall the results for level 2C and above were very slightly below the national figure. The results for Key Stage 2 in 1999 were below the national average, but exceeded the targets set by the teachers. When compared to schools of a similar background St. Anne's results were well above the average for reading and writing in Key Stage 1, above their average for English at level 4 and above, in Key Stage 2, and in line with them for level 5. Over the last four years girls have performed a little better than boys in both key stages, but this gap has been narrowing. The 1999 results are untypical of the school's improvement since the previous inspection. Overall standards have been rising from the previous inspection. There are particular reasons for the dip in 1999. That year group had a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs and of pupils with English as an additional language.

63. The school analyses the test results carefully question by question, and has adjusted the curriculum to counter the gaps that it found, particularly giving more emphasis to the detail in the teaching of writing. The teachers' assessments made of the pupils' attainment were quite close to their actual performance.

64. The standards in Key Stage 2, observed during the inspection, are in line with the average. Standards of listening are above average. Virtually all pupils pay good attention in class, for long periods, and can take in, and act upon information and instructions. Pupils with special educational needs have a shorter concentration span, but they also listen attentively and want to make the best use of the information they receive. Standards of speaking, are average. By the end of Year 6 a sizeable minority of pupils can speak articulately and confidently, but not enough pupils can do this, and in every class there are a few mostly silent individuals. Standards in reading are broadly average. Pupils are

particularly good at recognising and saying the print on the page, interpreting the text with expression and also at using techniques for extracting information. Relatively few, however, can draw their impressions from a very wide range of authors, or clearly express their comparisons, and awareness of beneath the surface meaning of text is below average. Several pupils had ideas that they wanted to convey about the books they had read, but could not find the words to do it.

65. Writing skills are in the average range. The oldest pupils are particularly good at thinking about a piece of writing, improving and extending it, re-drafting it in good, neat, longhand script. The range of the top older pupils' writing has improved considerably. Pupils with special educational needs show good concentration in getting to grips with basic spelling and sentence construction. Pupils' response has improved since 1996. No longer just good, pupils' attitudes and application are consistently very good. These well-behaved pupils are a credit to their parents and teachers.

66. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Though there is a wide range of ability, a good half of each class is very confident in writing. One class is particularly determined and most pupils release a flood of ideas, for instance about the character in "Dear Daddy". Their pages quickly fill with well constructed sentences, some of the pupils asking for extra time at playtime to reach their conclusion. The other class takes a skill based approach, with pupils looking more closely at words, so that when they learned about syllables they relished the challenge to use longer and longer words. This knowledge feeds into their reading, and a good proportion of pupils are making the bridge between sounding out letters and breaking words into syllables. Pupils' ability to listen to each other and to the teacher in various situations, is above average. Speaking skills are around average, but pupils are being introduced to a demanding level of vocabulary, and are clearly beginning to experiment with this.

67. Teaching overall, is very good. The literacy hour has bedded in well and teachers use it very effectively as a tool to control progress in every facet of English. Handwriting skills are put in place at an early stage, and pupils fail to use their good formation of letters only when they are too busy to notice, or occasionally when they are not reminded. From the early years good opportunities are created for pupils to sharpen their spelling. Again they only fail to use the strategies they have been taught when they are busy or not reminded. Teachers are particularly good, not only at planning thoughtful and interesting lessons, but at creating conditions where pupils can work with a quiet intensity. Very good management of the classes encourages all pupils to really think about what they are doing.

68. Teachers are good at setting tasks of varying difficulty to meet the needs of the wide range of abilities in their classes, building confidence and a strong self-image for pupils with special educational needs. They set high expectations for pupils' effort and presentation, paying particular attention to pushing the higher attaining pupils on. The Year 2 top groups, for instance can tell you all you need to know about multi-syllabic words. Teachers train pupils well in research and library skills, from Key Stage 1. Through this structured planning, pupils' understanding of deduction and inference grows steadily. Year 5 pupils' knowledge of genre is a mark of their good progress. These are significant improvements since the last inspection. The balance of the planning lies in reading and writing, at the expense of pupils' speaking skills, and the range of pupils' reading interests is somewhat limited.

69. Teachers often set the scene with spellbinding introductions that hold the pupils' riveted attention. In this way they promote long concentration spans in the pupils. The most effective learning occurs in those lessons where the introductions are shorter, giving teachers time to check round the class to see how everyone is coping and also time to mark some of the work by the side of the pupils. The information from this checking is then used effectively to feed back further points in the plenary session. Teachers emphasise well how they are building on earlier learning, by quickly referring to previous work, and often by sharing the objectives of a lesson with pupils. Year 6 take this knowledge of their own learning a step further, by writing targets they feel they need to achieve, additional to the ones the teachers have set. They do not yet see these in terms of advancing through curriculum 'levels'.

70. Good co-ordination has begun to extend the literacy strategy to operate across the curriculum, for instance pupils' research skills are used to advance learning in geography and history. The language structure they learn in French strengthens that they learn in English. Their reading skills are used to follow worksheets of instructions for using the computer, although this link is not sufficiently structured, since there is no regular planning for information technology within English.

71. A strong package of assessments keep the co-ordinators and teachers in touch with pupils' progress, enabling them to make informed decisions about grouping, planning future work, targets and organising the curriculum. The next step is to involve older pupils partially in this process. The strongest lesson planning showed exactly what pupils will know, understand and be able to do at the end of the lesson, and this gave the pupils a particularly clear idea of where they were going. Resources for English are very good, although the non-fiction stock in the school library is somewhat small for a school of this size. Books, charts and various work materials are well selected by teachers. Occasionally teachers ask for interesting words, but pupils do not have a thesaurus to hand to find them. The mini-whiteboards are valuable 'tools for the job' and pupils get a lot of benefit using them quickly to develop their spelling.

MATHEMATICS

72. The results of national tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 show that pupils were achieving standards that were well below the national average. This is a slightly different picture to the previous inspection when results were below average. However, when compared with similar schools, standards were average in 1999. Although the results in 1998 were not as high as 1997, they have improved over recent years and are in line with national trends. A different picture emerges in Key Stage 1. Results of tests in 1999 were broadly in line with the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools. However, standards at the last inspection were above average and the 1999 results have dropped from 1998. In both key stages, in particular years, there have been differences in the attainment of boys and girls but there is no consistent trend. At Key Stage 1 the performance of both boys and girls was well above the national average taking the years 1996 to 1999 together, whereas at Key Stage 2 the performance of boys was well below the national average for the same period of time compared to the girls' performance which was below average. The school's rigorous target setting procedures allows specific tracking of boys or girls if there are any concerns about individual progress.

73. The work seen in Year 2 indicates that above average standards are being achieved by the majority of pupils. They have a good understanding of place value and are able to successfully add two digit numbers together. Higher attaining pupils complete these sums by successfully 'exchanging' units for tens. Pupils have a good mathematical

vocabulary and produce number sentences that show subtraction is the inverse of addition. They can recognise patterns in number and complete sequences correctly. Pupils measure in centimetres and metres and tell the time using 'half-past' and 'quarter-past'. They recognise common two dimensional shapes and can identify some of their characteristics, for example, how many sides or corners they have. Pupils undertake simple data-handling and construct graphs from information they have gathered, for example, different pets in the class. Overall, pupils in Key Stage 1 learn well and make good progress. Year 1 pupils work with numbers up to twenty and understand their number bonds to 10. They count forward in twos and are able to carry out simple transactions using money. They compare things using the terms taller and shorter or heavier and lighter. The terms first, second and third are used and pupils produce simple pictograms. Pupils measure the length of objects using non-standard measures, for example, wooden cubes. By the time the pupils reach seven, they make good gains in knowledge and understanding.

74. Pupils in Year 6 are currently working at average levels. This is an improvement on last year and the school's target for their attainment is slightly above the national average achieved in 1999. Pupils have a secure understanding of the four rules of number. Higher attaining pupils work with numbers to three decimal places. As they solve number problems they are comfortable using different methods to find the reasonableness of their answers. Pupils calculate the areas of rectangles and right-angled triangles and understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They are able to construct different two dimensional shapes and measure different angles. Work in all aspects of mathematics is satisfactory and pupils are provided with good opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding to solve problems. Pupils throughout the key stage are making good progress in their ability to solve calculations mentally and all lessons correctly begin with some mental mathematics exercises. Pupils in Year 3 count up and back in fives while Year 4 pupils develop mental strategies for solving addition problems. Year 5 pupils have number stuck to their backs and work very quickly to find their 'partners' that add up to one hundred. Progress across the years is good for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs.

75. Teaching in both key stages is good overall with nearly twenty-five per cent of lessons being very good. A feature of the good and very good lessons is the ability of teachers to motivate pupils so that they develop an enthusiasm for the subject of mathematics and a desire to do well. During these lessons no time is wasted. They begin promptly and are continued at a brisk pace. There are high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and they are set challenging work. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils and it is returned to during the plenary session to assess whether it has been achieved. In a very good Year 4 numeracy lesson, a very brisk start set the tone for the whole lesson. The pupils worked quickly at their mental maths session and then the use of time deadlines in the main activity session accelerated the pupils' learning.

76. All teachers are good at teaching the basic skills of number and use the structure of the 'numeracy hour' well to deliver their lessons. Well organised resources are used effectively and teachers follow the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy very carefully. The yearly teaching programmes are adapted closely to the needs of the pupils and lessons are planned to include a good mental/oral session, a main activity devised for the different ability levels of pupils and a plenary session that is used well to discuss outcomes of work. Occasionally, it is not always clear in some teachers' planning, how the main activity will be organised so that the different ability groups in classes are catered for; however, evidence from lesson observations during the inspection indicated that pupils of different ability were well managed. Much of the direct teaching is of a high quality with all pupils playing an active part in the lesson by contributing to discussions,

answering well framed questions and explaining their answers and methods to the whole class. During the previous inspection there was criticism that the higher attaining pupils were not always provided with appropriate extension work. Teachers now have a good understanding about the needs of all their pupils. Homework, particularly in Key Stage 2, is set regularly and is used to reinforce what is learnt in the classroom. Teachers mark work regularly often attempting to undertake this during the lesson so that they can support pupils. A majority of teachers assess continuously as they work with individuals or groups and this helps pupils understand how they can improve. Good examples of this are seen during the mental maths sessions when pupils hold up their number fans or individual whiteboards for the teachers to see.

77. In both key stages, pupils use their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas. In science pupils use their measuring skills and represent some of their results in graphical form, for example, a graph showing variation and change in Year 2. Data is collected for information technology and in art pupils look very carefully at patterns. Numeracy displays are a noticeable feature in the school both in classrooms and corridors. 'Be a star at maths' or an interactive 'division decisions' display promote the subject in a positive and interesting way.

78. Pupils respond well in all lessons. They behave sensibly, concentrate on their work and are very keen to answer questions or explain their work. Pupils in Year 6 listened carefully as one of the class explained the processes for solving a problem while pupils in Year 5 confidently discussed what they were expected to do during a practical investigation. The ability of the teachers to maintain this high level of motivation and positive attitudes amongst the pupils has a significant impact on pupils' learning.

79. The subject is well managed by the two subject co-ordinators. They represent both key stages and are in temporary posts while the substantive post-holder is seconded to the local education authority. Mathematics is clearly identified in the school development plan and there is good monitoring of planning and teaching with appropriate feedback offered to members of staff. Teachers are required to set targets for individual pupils in mathematics and this rigorous approach ensures that the progress of individual pupils is closely monitored. There is a good range of formal assessment procedures in place and teachers are encouraged to evaluate each lesson before planning the next day's work. The subject co-ordinators have also produced a mini-action plan for their subject and targets from this plan are effectively monitored. The Key Stage 1 and 2 targets for the current academic year have been produced using relevant information and are appropriately challenging. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to set their own targets each term and this all contributes to the continued development of the subject through the school.

80. Resources are good overall with each class having its own numeracy resources, which are well organised and accessible to pupils. Some topic equipment is held centrally, but the eventual aim is that each class will become self-sufficient. Ten per cent of recent financial resources have been spent on pupils with special educational needs.

SCIENCE

81. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests results at the end of Key Stage 2 were close to the national average for both level 4 and the higher levels of attainment. When compared with similar schools standards were well above the average. Current standards seen during the period of the inspection shows that attainment is above the national average. This is an improvement on the results noted in the last report. Attainment of seven year old pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 according to teacher assessments was above national averages and below the national average for the higher levels. This was in line with those recorded in the last report. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 during the present inspection is judged to be in line with national averages.

82. By the time they are five pupils learn about the world around them. They investigate materials, sorting things by taste and smell, and how they themselves change and grow. In Key Stage 1 this is further developed through the new scheme of work based on the nationally recommended scheme from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which the school is using for the first time this year. This provides for a progressive development of a body of scientific knowledge and understanding alongside skills of investigation. For example, in Year 1 pupils look at different seeds and plants. They study the conditions necessary for plant growth and on an outside visit look at the different types of plants such as trees, flowers and mosses. Pupils' knowledge of the natural world is developed by looking at the life cycles of frogs, chicks and butterflies and the majority of pupils can recognise and name correctly the main parts of a flower. Knowledge and understanding of how materials can be sorted according to their properties such as magnetic or non-magnetic, and identifying the common properties of materials is closely linked to their own experiences. Pupils test materials to find out which make the best waterproof hat and look at the similarities and differences between animals, humans and plants. Teachers show a positive response to the new scheme of work that is supporting and improving their own knowledge and understanding of the subject. This is shown in the way they question pupils and guide them to explain and expand their ideas and thinking. The overall planning is good and activities are well-related to specific learning objectives for lessons that help to develop pupil's knowledge and understanding. Work in science is closely integrated through topics with other subjects in the curriculum such as art and design and technology. Most pupils respond well to the challenge of their work although higher attaining pupils are not always extended sufficiently by the work set for them. The majority of lessons in the Key Stage 1 have a good pace, pupils concentrate and work hard to complete the tasks set, and the overall learning of the majority of pupils is good. The new scheme will be reviewed next term and once established will enable the overall rate of learning of most pupils, particularly that of higher attaining pupils, to be moved forward more consistently across the whole key stage.

83. In Key Stage 2 science is taught as a separate subject and has benefited from the support of the national scheme for two years. Planning and the scrutiny of previous work shows that learning has been focused on the development of scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils do undertake a number of investigations throughout the Key Stage 2 classes but most of these are directed by the teacher. Pupils, particularly older pupils in Years 5 and 6, do not have enough opportunities to set up and conduct their own experiments. Planned activities show a good progression and continuity of learning and the majority of pupils are attaining above the national average by the end of the key stage. Year 3 pupils have looked at a healthy and balanced diet, a theme developed in Years 4 and 5 through the study of the effects of exercise and keeping healthy. By the end of the key stage, most pupils know that materials can be classified as solids, liquids or gases and higher attaining in Year 6 pupils can use their knowledge of mixtures and separation to

predict which solutions can be separated and which cannot. They study forces and their effects and all groups of pupils use graphs and tables to present their findings. For example, pupils can draw a table of their results of testing the measurement of temperature changes when a glass of ice cubes melt and can plot these on a line graph. Year 3 pupils test different types of soils following their work on rocks, sort different types of leaves and record their findings on a Carroll diagram they use in mathematics. No unsatisfactory teaching of science was seen during the period of the inspection which is an improvement from the last inspection. A very good lesson was seen in Year 5 where the teacher had set up a series of experiments for pupils to test the effects of gases in everyday things such as lemonade, hair spray and vinegar. This lesson was a very good example of the best kind of lesson. There were a series of challenging activities, well planned and resourced so that all pupils could settle to their work quickly, good teacher knowledge used to help pupils expand their ideas, and pupils were enthusiastic about their learning. Where lessons were less than good the introduction to the activities often went on too long, pupils were over-directed by the teacher and the lesson objectives were not sufficiently detailed. Teachers throughout the school develop very good relationships with the great majority of their pupils. These relationships are enhanced by the good use of time, resources and support staff which motivate and enthuse the pupils. The majority of teachers make good use of question and answer sessions at the start and end of lessons to check on learning and to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils could be given more opportunities to take charge of their own learning and develop their independent research and investigation skills. More use could be made of information technology than at present but the school has plans to develop this when the new computer suite is further developed.

84. The subject is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has done much to raise the profile of the subject across the school. Teachers' planning and pupils' work is monitored and targets for development are set out for each class. New assessment books are being tested for Years 1 and 2 and similar ones have been taken from the Internet for Key Stage 2 classes. Resources for the teaching and learning of science are good; this is an improvement from the last inspection. They are used well in all classes and have a positive impact on attainment.

ART

85. Art was identified during the previous inspection as strength of the school and this has been maintained. Pupils' achievements in art are good throughout the school and this is reflected in the good quality displays that enhance the corridors and classrooms. For example, along the Early Years' corridor the pupils have produced bright coloured paintings of what they will be when they grow up.

86. Pupils in Year 1 use paints, pastels and shiny paper to make 'under the sea' pictures. In links with science; pupils sketch still life drawings of fruit selecting their own materials and techniques to present their work effectively. Again, in further links with science the pupils in Year 1 carefully and accurately paint sunflowers that produce a brightly coloured display outside the classroom. Pupils in Year 2 paint detailed blue willow patterns onto paper plates in a lesson which links well with written work completed in literacy lessons. Using the Mona Lisa as a starting point and following their work on self-portraits, the pupils use paints and pastels to produce portraits of their classmates. A wide range of materials is used well to produce tone and to mix colours. For example, pastels are rubbed onto paper to create a natural looking skin colour. Pupils produce good observational drawings of plants

that show good skill development in a variety of media; such as pencil, crayon and pastels and techniques such as shading and blending.

87. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to develop their knowledge of the subject and its associated skills. In Year 3, pupils skilfully decorate Greek pots as part of a history topic and produce African patterns, which relate well to their work in geography. Using Vincent Van Gogh's 'Starry Night' they continue their work on the features of landscapes. They show a good understanding of the use of texture as they study the work of Van Gogh. Year 4 pupils paint realistic sunsets using 'hot colours' in work linked to science. In their sketchbooks they draw lifelike sketches of shoes. Showing an increasing attention to detail, pastel sketches of classroom objects are produced. Year 5 pupils develop sketched miniatures of Tudor monarchs. They develop a good understanding of the work of Paul Clee. Although no art lessons were observed in Year 6, evidence from the inspection suggests that pupils work well using a wide range of materials, tools and techniques and they have a good understanding of the work of different artists. Pupils produce an impressive range of pictures in the style of Pablo Picasso's cubism period and designs similar to Clarice Cliff. Using views from the roof playground they develop pictures in the style of Lowry that show a good understanding of perspective and draw pencil sketches of Liverpool cathedral.

88. Pupils' response to lessons is good and often very good. They enjoy art and are interested and involved. Pupils listen carefully, answer questions confidently and all settle quickly to the tasks set. They develop good relationships with each other and are able to concentrate fully for appropriate amounts of time and talk enthusiastically about what they have learned. All pupils work well independently.

89. Throughout the school, displays of paintings create an attractive visual environment and clearly demonstrate good progress. However, pupils' experience of three-dimensional art is more limited. The teaching of art is good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Planning for lessons is good and lessons are well resourced. However, opportunities for assessment are not consistent throughout the school. Teachers interact well within groups and give good supportive and helpful comments to the pupils. Some teachers give pupils opportunities to evaluate their artwork and the work of others.

90. There is a comprehensive policy for art which guides teachers very well and ensures the progressive teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils have the opportunity to use their art skills in other subjects such as in English and history. Older pupils are able to join the art club after school that is oversubscribed and thus shows the popularity of the subject. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop the use of sketchbooks. Pupils' work is displayed in an attractive and stimulating way. The examples show a wide variety of techniques and are very well presented.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Three design and technology lessons were observed during the course of the inspection. Evidence was also drawn from the comprehensive display of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers about their work and looking at teachers planning. The pupils' work, seen from both key stages, was impressive and of a good standard.

92. Key Stage 1 pupils produce a banner using resistance to dye and have explored the various materials that could be used. The designs and patterns were linked to art in a topic around hot and cold colours. When other subjects are linked to design and technology, the important skills of designing and making are retained

93. In Key Stage 2, pupils work out and develop the skills of cutting and folding to make African masks. The design, based on a prototype enables pupils to extend their ideas and complete authentic masks, which they use in relation to an African music theme. In the technology challenge for pupils in Year 4, they had to produce a moving vehicle. This clearly resulted in pupils using a wide range of materials and ideas. The results identifying the use of friction and how things can move with the use of gears, are of a good standard for pupils of this age.

94. The use of interactive displays is a very good feature. Pupils in Year 4 used the making of a box to challenge others to make themselves 'a maths star' by making Jack jump out of a box if they could find the correct answer to the sum. This is a very useful support to mental maths work. The pupils had to make a small box; devise ways of leaving an open lid and ensure that the answer appeared the correct place. The work produced by Year 6, linked to their topic on bridges is broad ranging and includes all the elements required to design and make a structure. The pupils' notebooks outlines initial sketches, ways materials could be joined and how the bridge would operate. The bridge components are clearly identified and the link with both science and history clearly shown.

95. There is good progression in the subject from Nursery to Year 6. Pupils are challenged, and their notebooks are an integral part of the design and make process. Informed comments in teachers marking assist pupils' ideas. The evaluation by pupils of their models and designs is a good feature at the conclusion of a topic.

96. The quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is good and teachers ensure that good progress is made in lessons. Teacher planning is one of many strengths of the school. Teachers plan well together to make certain that there are a variety of tasks which can develop pupils' skills and the results enhance other aspects of learning across the curriculum.

97. The subject is well resourced. All resources are accessible and managed. It is reviewed on an annual basis in the light of national developments. A more detailed record, which could identify individual pupil skills, is being evolved and will assist in the development of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

98. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory in geography. They begin in Key Stage 1 by developing a good awareness of their immediate locality, plotting their route to school with reasonable accuracy by showing clear landmarks from their home to school. They move on to learn useful facts about the British Isles, and the location of the main centres of population. In Key Stage 2, their knowledge broadens, and pupils show a sound knowledge of other countries. They understand some of the problems posed by the terrain and climate of Africa, and write knowledgeably about why, and how, people trap water to use for irrigation. Pupils develop a good knowledge of the Indian Continent, and higher attaining pupils write in detail about how the population struggles to combat the threat of erosion. Their mapping skills are good, and profit from excellent opportunities during a residential visit to Wales, where they learn to use six-figure references to find their way using maps. Their research skills develop well, and the school has responded positively to criticisms in the previous inspection concerning their weaknesses in this area. Most use books and CD-ROM programs well to find useful facts about countries of the world, and their main physical and human characteristics.

99. It was only possible to observe one geography lesson during this inspection, but the

scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that the curriculum is broad and balanced, and pupils are presented with a sound range of geographical experiences. Teachers benefit from a good scheme of work designed by the co-ordinator, which provides a good basis for their lesson plans. Resources are satisfactory, and include a sound range of maps, globes, aerial photographs and computer research programs.

HISTORY

100. The quality of pupils' learning in history is good. They make a good start in Key Stage 1, and soon develop a clear idea of chronology. Teachers make very effective use of pupils' own families to give them a good idea of how life was different in their parents' or grandparents' youth. Pupils are given interesting tasks to do at home, asking their families, for example, about what life was like in the past; this works well, bringing history to life, and giving pupils a real understanding of history. Pupils' work about famous people shows a good understanding of the contribution they made to society. They talk knowledgeably, for example, about Florence Nightingale in Year 2, and how she made such a difference in the condition of hospitals at that time. Pupils' research skills develop early, and by Year 3, most use a wide range of sources capably to find out about life in Ancient Egypt. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection, when pupils' research skills were weak. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good historical knowledge. They show a clear understanding of the harsh conditions people experienced in the 1930's, and why these conditions arose. They use books and computers well to research about the Tudors, and have a sound understanding of how different sources can yield different interpretations of history.

101. The quality of teaching in history is good. This is an improvement from the satisfactory teaching in the previous inspection. The main strength of the teaching lies in teachers' enthusiasm for history. They provide exciting resources, which kindle pupils' enthusiasm and make them want to find out more. The video tape, for example, on Florence Nightingale, was a great stimulus, and encouraged pupils to find information from books and CD-ROM programs to develop their knowledge further. This worked equally well for high and low attaining pupils, giving them opportunities to conduct research at their own levels, and develop their learning well as a result. In another effective lesson, the teacher provided graphic accounts of punishments in Saxon times, and pupils could hardly wait to research more into which particular parts of peoples' bodies were cut off as a punishment. All teachers have a good knowledge of the curriculum for history, and this gives pupils confidence, knowing either that their questions will always be answered, or that their teacher will know where best to research the topic.

102. The co-ordinator gives good support to colleagues, and has built up a good selection of books, CD-ROMs and artefacts to make lessons exciting. There is a great sense of history in this school, and teachers take every opportunity to make pupils feel part of this history. When the newly refurbished school was completed, for example, pupils marched through the streets, taking the same route as pupils did in 1915 when the original building was opened.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

103. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with those expected for the pupils age. Pupils nearing the end of Year 6 are in line to achieve the expected standards in some of the strands, but the overall standards across the year group, which include gaps in some areas are below average. The school is well placed to remedy this situation rapidly. The older equipment mentioned in the previous report has all gone, replaced by an effective new computer suite, and modern computers in the classrooms. Year 2 pupils are competent at locating the software they need from the computer's menus, and can explain how they use the art program to write their names, or the dictionary program to find new words. They are not quite so confident with data handling. Year 6 pupils are strongest on word processing and some of the latest applications on the Internet. They are less certain about more detailed data handling, for instance within geography and science. The equipment needed to achieve the measuring of data by computer is not yet in place.

104. Pupils receive sound teaching in Key Stage 1 and progress is satisfactory. Teachers use the classroom computers at present, being scheduled to start using the computer suite in September. Pupils go on to the computer on a rota basis, and their turns are recorded on a record sheet. This is a sound strategy, but there are parts of the day when the computer is not in use.

105. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. All the lessons observed were in the computer suite. The teachers are particularly good at settling the classes, briefly explaining and demonstrating the new skill to be learned and then giving pupils plenty of time to practice. Pupils work eagerly on the well selected tasks and management is not an issue. Pupils' concentration is intense throughout the lessons, allowing teachers to target their support for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make nearly the same rate of progress as their peers. Progress overall is good, at times very good. Teachers wisely allow time for pupils to explore features of the computer beyond the immediate objectives of the lesson. Then they make rapid gains in knowledge and skill. A Year 3 class lesson on designing 'crazy hats' showed how rapidly a class could progress to achieving above average skills. Staff confidence and expertise has improved since 1997, but some teachers are still not fully confident with the computer in this new situation.

106. Several subjects feed into computer learning effectively. Literacy is useful for enabling pupils to read their worksheets or on screen instructions. Numeracy also contributes important skills, such as the knowledge of angles which underpins pupils' understanding of how a control program constructs squares and oblongs. However, these activities tend to be incidental as teachers' general planning does not specify how information technology is to be developed in other subjects. Some pupils are withdrawn from computer time for extension English work and this has a negative effect on their progress.

107. The co-ordinators have a good overview of information technology in the school. They are alert to problems such as the difference in skills of pupils with computers at home. Their development plan for information technology includes a reviewed scheme of work which details much more precisely the balance between skills-teaching and the use of the computer in support of subjects, and exactly which skills, in which order and how much time is allocated to achieving them. The development plan also addresses the need for an assessment system to track pupils' progress, which will include pupils themselves in the process to give them a greater insight into their progress level by level. The co-ordinators have started a valuable training program for parents who may want to help with computers

in schools. They also organise a course for higher attaining pupils in which they extend their skills into desk top publishing of a school magazine.

MUSIC

108. Although a limited number of lessons were observed, evidence from inspection indicates that the quality of learning in music is satisfactory. Pupils understand concepts of pitch, dynamics and mood and recognise high and low sounds when played. Singing is satisfactory with most pupils able to pitch accurately and to use their breathing to phrase sensitively. No examples of compositions were available for the inspection.

109. Teaching overall is satisfactory with good features. There is an enthusiasm for music that the pupils share. Where they are able teachers use their own skill in music to support pupils' performance, especially in singing lessons. Lack of confidence in their own performance often means that teachers do not give sufficient lead in demonstrating skills and challenging pupils with activities to achieve a deeper understanding. When introducing pupils to the technical vocabulary of music teachers do not use enough examples of music to illustrate these points.

110. Pupils behave very well and take enjoyment particularly in exploring sounds with their voices and instruments. A small number of pupils learn violin, flute and 'cello and they value this opportunity to extend their music-making and perform in assemblies and concerts.

111. Music is enthusiastically led and the co-ordinator has worked hard to resource the department with new instruments for the classroom and individual lessons. Opportunities are provided for attending concerts and the theatre. Performances are arranged and pupils are enthusiastic about taking part in them. Pupils' performance enhances the worship of the school. There is no clear system for assessing how well pupils are learning in music and the rate at which they are developing their skill. Recordings are often made of pupils' work but these are not organised into examples of their achievement as they move through the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. During the inspection week lessons were observed in gymnastics, games and dance. Although no swimming was observed during the inspection the majority of pupils leave the school achieving the requirements for this aspect of physical education. Overall pupils learn well in the subject.

113. Pupils in Year 1 perform sound gymnastic skills related to travelling. They are able to perform basic actions which are well linked together both on the floor and on the large apparatus. Pupils watch the performance of others sensibly and make clear observations about the work of other pupils. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils complete simple gymnastic skills and develop well-controlled sequences that involve rolling and travelling under and over apparatus. Pupils use space well and move the large apparatus safely. Their performance improves with practice and they confidently talk about what they have done. In a very good Year 5 dance lesson, pupils entered the hall and found their own spaces. After a rigorous warm-up they perform two Tudor dances which relates well to their history topic. The pupils show good control over their movements and are continually active and engaged. Year 6 pupils show well-developed football skills as they practise sending, receiving, and striking the ball. Pupils have a good understanding of how the skills are linked to the competitive game and are active throughout the whole lesson.

114. Attitudes to physical education are good and in many instances are very good. Pupils are eager to participate and to demonstrate, for example, Year 6 pupils providing examples of their own game to develop football skills. They are very responsible as they take out and put away equipment and apparatus. Pupils help and encourage each other, sometimes applauding someone else's efforts quite spontaneously, as in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson.

115. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching. Teachers plan their lesson well and appropriate attention is paid to health and safety issues. Although the school does not have its own playing fields, Key Stage 2 pupils use local facilities during part of the year. Consequently the school provides a good balance of activities and Key Stage 2 pupils have an opportunity to attend swimming lessons and take part in the local education authority swimming scheme. Where staff are less confident with the subject some of the activities provided are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils. Although the majority of lessons have a good pace and time is used well, the storage of large apparatus in the hall does not make it easy for the younger pupils to set it out and this impacts on the overall pace of lessons.

116. Resources are satisfactory and games equipment is appropriately stored so that it is accessible for both pupils and teachers. The school hall is clean and well maintained and the two large pillars situated in the centre have been covered to prevent accidents. Pupils can attend extra curricular activities to develop their sporting skills and opportunities are provided for competitive sports for example mixed football tournaments.