

INSPECTION REPORT

GROVE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

New Ferry

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 105011

Headteacher: Mrs N Little

Reporting inspector: Mr A Portlock
21411

Dates of inspection: 29 October - 1 November 2001

Inspection number: 194233

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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: Nursery, infant and junior

School category: County

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Grove Street
New Ferry
Wirral

Postcode: L62 5BA

Telephone number: 0151 645 2170

Fax number: 0151 644 1992

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Vobe

Date of previous inspection: 14 -18 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21411	A. PORTLOCK	Registered inspector	Design technology	What sort of school is it?
			Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
				How well pupils are taught.
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
11437	A. ANDERSON	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29989	P. GOODSSELL	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			History	
			Special educational needs	
			English as an additional language.	
			Equal opportunities.	
15334	J. HOOPER	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum	
			Art	
			Religious education	
17686	G. SIMPSON	Team inspector	Science	
			Information and communication technology	
			Geography	
21398	T. GILL	Team inspector	English	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Music	

The inspection contractor was: Sandfield Educational Consultants
 16 Wychwood Drive
 Trowell Park
 Nottingham, NG9 3RB

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 Complaints Manager

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	6
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?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Grove Street is a bigger than average-sized primary school catering for pupils aged 3 to 11. There are 303 full-time pupils (171 boys and 132 girls) on roll, including 28 children in reception, and 51 part-time nursery and reception children. About 63 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Most of the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. There are two German speaking pupils, who are fluent in English, and two foundation stage children who are learning English as an additional language who joined the school during the inspection. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. There are 54 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is much higher than average and 3 pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. Few pupils join or leave the school at times other than at the normal times. The school will become part of the local Education Action Zone that is being established. The school has gained the Investors in People Award and has achieved ECO School status for its work on the environment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Grove Street is an effective school that provides good value for money. Effective leadership, a good start in the foundation stage, a supportive and caring environment and good teaching provide the children with a good education, particularly in reading and science. This has brought about significant improvements in English, mathematics and science standards and enables the children to make good progress overall by the time that they leave the school.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve well, particularly in reading and science, by the age of 11.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy-headteacher, the governors and the senior staff, provides effective leadership that has brought about significant improvements in standards.
- The good teaching is contributing to raising standards and helps the pupils to achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
- The good start to school in the foundation stage.
- The high level of care provided for pupils.
- The very good partnership with parents and links with the local community greatly support the very positive school ethos.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and writing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in April 1997, the school has made good overall improvement. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved significantly. The greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy is supporting the pupils' progress. There is now a much greater partnership with parents and the community. The provision for information and communication technology is much improved. All the issues from the last inspection have been tackled well. The pupils' attainment and progress is now effectively monitored in English, mathematics and science. The good teaching observed in many classes and subjects is now extended throughout the school. The planning has improved and is now good overall. Appropriate information is collected on how well pupils are achieving and this is used by all teachers to help them plan. There is an appropriate amount of time allocated to teaching in Key Stage 2.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	B	A
Mathematics	E	E	D	B
Science	E	D	C	A

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

The 2001 test results show that by the time the pupils leave the school, standards in English, are above average, in mathematics below average and in science average. Standards in reading are a particular strength. However, standards in writing and mathematics are still not high enough. The rate of improvement of these subjects is broadly in line with that found nationally over the last four years. However, in English the rate of improvement has been above that found nationally. The 2001 test results for 7-year-olds show that standards were average in writing and mathematics, and below average in reading. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has exceeded its targets, which are based upon the increasingly effective teachers' assessments.

Inspection findings indicate that most children in the foundation stage make good progress and most achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In English, standards in speaking and listening are average. Throughout the school the pupils are learning to read well. The quality of their writing is improving as the pupils progress through the school. However, some pupils lack fluency in their written work and the opportunities for sustained writing in which to develop and refine the pupils' writing skills both in English and in other subjects is insufficient. In mathematics, standards have improved significantly over the last two years. The standard of work seen show that 7-year-olds attain average standards and 11-year-olds below average standards. However, standards could be higher as the pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English and science. In science, standards are average for both the current seven and 11-years-olds, and the pupils achieve well. Boys and girls make good progress and achieve equally well. In other subjects, standards are in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds as they were at the last inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have a good attitude towards their work and to school. The pupils are generally enthusiastic and listen well to the teachers' instructions. They work well and play well together. They are polite and well-mannered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is good. They develop self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility, quietly carrying out duties in class and around the school. Relationships are good, friendly and constructive.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance is below that found nationally.

The pupils generally move around the school in a sensible manner. They look after equipment well and through the school's keen interest in enhancing the environment, the pupils care for the school has

been significantly enhanced. The pupils are proud of the responsibility given to them when chosen to be class and school monitors. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Attendance levels are too low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

The quality of teaching is good overall. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially in the reduction in unsatisfactory teaching and in the increase in the amount of good and very good teaching. Of the 78 lessons observed, two-thirds of them were good or better. The teaching in the foundation stage, infant and junior classes is good overall. Four lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory, largely because of the teachers' lack of control and management of some pupils' inappropriate behaviour, some of which was caused by some pupils' over excitement and the teachers' lack of subject knowledge in ICT.

The school is working to meet the needs of all pupils effectively, including those pupils with special educational needs. The overall quality of teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good. The teaching in English, mathematics and science lessons is good. The improvement in teaching supports the pupils' good progress in their learning. The teaching of the skills of literacy are good and satisfactory in numeracy, although in some classes there are low expectations in numeracy. The work of the support staff, especially in supporting literacy, numeracy and special educational needs is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The foundation stage curriculum is broad and balanced and of good quality. For the infant and junior pupils, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum but there is less time for work in art, design technology, geography, history, music and physical education than in most schools, making it difficult to provide learning opportunities in sufficient depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for the pupils who have special educational needs. They have access to the full curriculum and are helped to benefit from it through careful planning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for the newly arrived pupils who are learning English as an additional language is satisfactory but the school needs to develop a policy in order to support these pupils' education throughout the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision the school makes for the pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. It is sound for their spiritual and cultural development. The pupils' social skills and moral awareness are well promoted.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The standard of care provided by the teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Clear procedures are in place for identifying and controlling risks to health and safety.

The curriculum for the youngest pupils is relevant and stimulating and it interests and motivates the children to learn. The curriculum for infant and junior pupils includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and meets statutory requirements for all subjects. The school has rightly given a high priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and this has been successful in

raising these standards significantly. However, this has been at the expense of the time available for the teaching of art, design technology, geography, history, music and physical education, as standards could be higher. The daily act of collective worship is of a limited nature when taken in classrooms. Child protection procedures are effectively in place and meet statutory requirements. The school monitors absence and lateness but the promoting and improvement of higher attendance levels is not as strong and attendance is still below average. The partnership with parents is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, together with the deputy-headteacher and senior staff with management responsibilities, provide good leadership and a clear educational direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher and provide effective support for the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and as a result the quality of teaching has improved.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its finances well and plans ahead. The headteacher and the governors are very aware of the need to provide a high standard of educational provision and finances are properly targeted to improving standards throughout the school.

The governors ensure that the school receives best value for its spending. Such principles are rigorously applied when obtaining tenders and in comparing the school's performance with that of similar schools. There are adequate learning resources, good levels of staffing and the school's accommodation is good.

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 is approachable. • The children like school and make good progress. • The children are expected to work hard. • The teaching is good. • The school helps the children to become more mature. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views and found that overall there was a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons, although mostly for older pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, the attainment of the children when they enter the nursery is below that expected for the children of their age. The attainment on entry varies, as was the case with the present Year 6 whose attainment was well below average. When they enter the nursery, a significant number of the children have poorly developed speech and the development of communication, language and literacy skills is a high priority. Due to the good and often very good teaching pupils make significant progress in their learning throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes. As a result, by the end of the reception year most children are likely to meet the expected standards for the children of their age in all areas of development, with a substantial number achieving beyond this in their physical development.
2. The inspection evidence indicates that standards in English have made a good improvement since the last inspection and are now average for both seven and 11-year-olds. The improvements are reflected in the most recent national test results. The school is aware that the standards of the present 11-year-olds are lower than the above average standards indicated in the national tests, largely because this is a lower attaining year group. The attainment of boys and girls is not significantly different. Standards are better in reading than in writing, particularly for the 11-year-old pupils. Standards in reading are above average for both seven and 11-year-olds, which indicates good improvement. By the age of 11, most of the pupils read fluently, with confidence and with expression; some are very knowledgeable about books and authors. Standards of writing at the ages seven and 11 are average but could be higher. Some pupils lack fluency in their written work. However, both infant and junior pupils, including the pupils with special needs and those identified by the school as gifted and talented, achieve well compared to their below average attainment on entry to the school.
3. Standards in mathematics have improved significantly over the last two years. Prior to this standards were well below average. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and an improved system identifying how well the pupils are achieving are beginning to have an effect in helping to raise standards. The school is also grouping the pupils according to their abilities in lessons so that the work can be better matched to their needs. The standard of work seen during the inspection is similar to the results of the most recent national tests; 7-year-olds attain average standards and 11-year-olds below average standards. However, standards could be higher; the pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English and science. At times some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of the capabilities of the average and more-able pupils and this limits their progress overall. Whilst the setting of targets for groups of pupils makes it clear to most pupils what they need to do to improve and has a positive effect on standards they achieve, some still are not sufficiently sure what they need to do.
4. Standards have improved in science since the time of the last inspection. All pupils achieved at least the average standard in the most recent national tests for 11-year-olds. Standards overall were broadly in line with the national average and were very good in comparison with similar schools. Standards are average for both the current seven and 11-years-olds. There has been little difference between the performance of boys and girls during this time, although girls have achieved slightly better. The teacher assessments of seven-year-olds indicate that the pupils attain above average standards. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Given the below average attainment on entry to school, achievement throughout the infants and juniors is good, including those pupils who have special educational needs.
5. The good progress made in English, particularly in reading, and science and to a lesser degree in mathematics is largely due to the improvements in the teaching, the pupils' positive attitudes and the effective introduction of the literacy and numeracy frameworks and the national guidelines for science. The gifted and talented pupils identified by the school also make good progress.

6. In art, design technology, geography, history, ICT, physical education and religious education standards are average for both seven and 11-year-olds. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Much progress has been made in the provision of computers and a computer suite, and consequently standards have improved. The school's self-assessment shows that the pupils were two years behind the required standard when the computer provision was upgraded two years ago. Consequently, progress in the last two years has been swift and the acquired skills are much more securely established. It was not possible to judge the standards in music overall on the limited inspection evidence, although standards of the singing were judged to be average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils' attitudes to their work, behaviour and personal development are good, as they were at the last inspection. The parents feel that the pupils' behaviour has improved significantly. The children in the nursery and reception classes clearly enjoy their work. In the nursery, they cooperate happily with each other and with adults. The children take care of classroom equipment and quickly learn to tidy up after themselves. This good level of interest, enthusiasm and co-operation continues as the children move to the reception year. They increase their ability to concentrate and to develop their levels of co-operation. In the infant classes, a good example of the pupils' positive attitudes to their work was demonstrated in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, in which the pupils responded well to the teacher's questions. They were eager to learn and were interested in the work. This continues throughout the school and by age 11 pupils are hard working, polite and eager to learn.
8. Most pupils display good and consistent behaviour in lessons and when moving around the school, in the dining hall and playground. In lessons where the teaching was good or very good, the pupils were quick to respond to the challenges set. In one very good personal development lesson, the pupils demonstrated their ability to sustain concentration and to work in partnership with their fellow pupils. As at the last inspection, throughout the school there are small number of the pupils who present challenging attitudes and behaviour. In a small number of lessons, where the teaching was unsatisfactory, these pupils had difficulty in concentrating and this resulted in inappropriate behaviour. There have been no exclusions from the school over the past two years. The pupils are nearly always punctual but the overall attendance at the school is below the national average.
9. In one-to-one situations, small groups and in whole class situations, the pupils with special educational needs are supported and encouraged and this ensures that they are able, for example, to answer questions in discussions and to take part in school activities. They have very good relationships with adults who support them individually, when working in small groups and in whole class activities.
10. The relationships between pupils and teachers and pupils and pupils are consistently good. The pupils work well together, for example, when sharing computers with their partner in the computer suite. The pupils enjoy helping each other through the various responsibilities they are given. This was demonstrated by the group of older pupils who act as prefects and take their responsibilities very seriously. The pupils are polite, for example, they will hold doors open for groups of children and adults to pass through.
11. The pupils' personal development is good. They develop self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility, for example, when undertaking tasks, such as taking registers to the office and tidying up the classrooms. Older pupils take on responsibilities that include: helping younger pupils, acting as helpers during lunch breaks and sitting with younger year groups during assembly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection, especially in the reduction in unsatisfactory teaching and in the increase in the amount of good

and very good teaching. Of the 78 lessons observed, two-thirds of them were good or better. The teaching in the foundation stage, infant and junior classes is good overall. The pupils mostly respond positively to the teachers' expectations, showing good attitudes to their work and good behaviour. This means that the pupils' learning is well supported because they are more attentive to what they are being taught and the tasks they have to complete. Four lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory, largely because of the pupils' inappropriate behaviour, some of which was caused by the pupils' over excitement and the teachers' lack of subject knowledge in ICT.

13. The class teachers plan the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs. The work is generally well matched to pupils' needs and identifies the small steps needed for them to make good progress; the plans are carried out with close liaison between the class teachers and the teaching assistants. The gains towards targets are recorded and the plans are reviewed on a termly basis. The teaching assistants manage pupils very well; they maintain good standards of behaviour, and effectively use a range of teaching methods. This enables the pupils with special educational needs to make consistently good progress.
14. The quality of the teaching of the children in the nursery and reception classes is good and often very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in these classes. This consistently good or better teaching is reflected in the good rate of progress the children make in their early years at school. The teachers, nursery nurses and all members of the support staff have a clear understanding of the educational and social needs of young children. All members of staff have realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour. There is a significant increase in the level of challenging and interesting tasks as the children move from the nursery to the reception classes. This has a positive impact on developing the children's knowledge and understanding. All members of staff speak precisely and clearly. This helps the children to make good progress in developing their speaking skills. The children with special educational needs make good progress and are included in all activities. The school is assessing the needs of the two children who joined the school at the time of the inspection, who are at a very early stage of learning English as an additional language. All members of staff place careful emphasis on the teaching of basic skills of phonics and counting and number recognition, and other specific skills, for example, how to use pencils, paint and scissors. They encourage pupils to work independently and make choices.
15. The quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science is good overall and this is reflected in the good progress the pupils make. Although teaching and standards have improved overall in mathematics, some teachers do not expect enough of the average and more-able pupils and this limits their overall achievement and partly accounts for the lower standards in mathematics than in English and science. However, in English and mathematics the teachers have a clear understanding and knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and their implementation has been significant in improving the quality of teaching in these subjects. It has effectively supported the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. The fact that the pupils are grouped according to ability for literacy and numeracy allows the teachers to plan appropriate work. However, in a few lessons, the teachers' planning does not take sufficient account of the differing abilities within the group. In science, the adoption of the national guidelines has also helped to support the teachers in planning and structuring the lessons well. In these three core subjects, most teachers plan with confidence. The pupils listen attentively to the teacher's explanations and teachers usually begin with a clear indication of what the pupils are going to learn and mostly build effectively on the work done in the previous lessons. This helps the pupils to focus appropriately on the purpose of the lesson. In the most effective lessons, the teachers' high expectations challenge the pupils to extend their understanding and learn new literacy and numeracy skills and this enables the pupils to make good progress. The pupils respond well to this and apply themselves in the effort that they make. However, the opportunities for sustained writing in which to develop and refine the pupils' writing skills both in English and in other subjects, is insufficient. Also, in a few lessons, the pace of the lesson is slower because the teachers have lower expectations of what could be achieved by the pupils. Behaviour management is a strength of most teachers and support staff and this helps to establish good relationships and ensures that the pupils' attitudes to English and mathematics are good throughout the school. This helps the pupils to gain in confidence; they respond with interest, for example when talking about their work they mostly give accurate or sensible answers. Teaching assistants support the teaching

of literacy and numeracy well and they guide and support the pupils, particularly those who need extra help, effectively in their learning. The teachers plan homework for the pupils that usually supports work being done in class; it is given regularly and checked on its return by the teachers.

16. In the one art lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The teacher had a good knowledge of the subject and gave the pupils the opportunity to experiment and continually encouraged them to appraise their work. In design technology, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. All lessons seen were the initial lesson of this half-term's work and concentrated on allowing the pupils to begin thinking about the various design and make activities that they were presented with. The tasks set are interesting and appropriate for the pupils; the pupils enjoy the tasks and persevere to complete them within the given time. The quality of teaching and learning in geography is satisfactory. The best lessons used a variety of resources and methods, which successfully engaged the pupils' interest and curiosity. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson when unacceptable behaviour affected the pupils' learning. In history, the quality of the teaching and learning was good and the pupils made good progress. The teachers have a good knowledge of the history they are teaching; they introduce the topics in a lively and interesting way and provide activities that give the pupils opportunities to learn about characteristics of past periods and societies and events and people involved in them. In ICT, the quality of teaching and learning varied. When teaching was satisfactory or better, teachers systematically taught the necessary skills using the multi media projector to aid access for all pupils. Teachers in these lessons either demonstrated good subject knowledge or used well-prepared guides to assist them. When the quality of teaching and learning was unsatisfactory, the pupils allowed their excitement to affect their behaviour, which was not well managed by the teacher. Music teaching was satisfactory in the singing lessons seen in junior classes. In physical education, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Where teaching is good there is a high level of physical challenge for pupils and the pace of lessons is maintained, allowing the pupils to respond to lessons with enthusiasm and a sense of enjoyment. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education was predominantly good at both key stages, although there was one unsatisfactory lesson in which the teacher had difficulties in maintaining appropriate control in her lesson, and this led to a loss of teaching and learning time

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

17. In the foundation stage (nursery and reception), the teachers make good provision for the children's all round development and education. The teachers' planning for the children in all classes meets the requirements of the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals for young children. All teachers generally plan to meet individual needs and effectively challenge differing abilities. The planned activities are appropriate to the age and needs of the children and the children are motivated to take part.
18. For infant and junior pupils, the curriculum provides all pupils with a broad range of opportunities for learning. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and gives suitable emphasis to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy; this is having a positive impact on the improvements in the pupils' standards in these subjects. In order to improve standards in English and mathematics the amount of time devoted to the subjects was rightly increased and is above average when compared with other schools. Since the last inspection the amount of time devoted to the curriculum at Key Stage 2 has been increased to 23.75 hours, which is now broadly in line with the recommended minimum time. However, the amount of time devoted to art and design, music, design and technology, geography, history and physical education is below average. This makes it difficult to cover these subjects in sufficient depth. The school is aware of this and is looking at ways to improve the situation. For example, in music, time has been added for singing in Years 5 and 6. Whilst the curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects included in the National Curriculum. The daily act of collective worship is of a limited nature when taken in classrooms. There is a good range of opportunities for older pupils to take part in clubs, such as football for boys and girls, a French club and a study skills club. However, there are few opportunities for younger pupils to take part in activities outside of lessons.

19. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good. In class lessons these pupils receive effective support from a good team of teaching assistants, who work closely with the class teachers to determine their role in the lesson. The curriculum for the pupils is enhanced through the provision of good quality resources and these are used well both in the withdrawal groups and in lessons. This results in these pupils having full access to the curriculum. The provision noted on the statements of special educational needs is satisfactorily implemented.
20. Good links with the local secondary schools help the pupils to prepare for their move to secondary education. Another example of the close links with a local secondary school is the help offered to develop the French club for older pupils.
21. The breadth of the curriculum is further enhanced through its good provision for personal, social and moral education which is taught in all classes. Statutory requirements relating to sex and relationship education, and drugs education are met, and incorporated within the effective health education programme, which adds richness to the curriculum across the whole school. Indeed, the school has been rightly recognised as a 'Health Promoting School.'
22. The personal, social and moral education programme is also helping the pupils to develop confidence in making the most of their abilities. Effective teaching helps the pupils to recognise their achievements and, the practice of helping the pupils to set personal targets after reviewing their current achievements has developed effectively since the last inspection and helps foster the pupils' self esteem and understanding. Through the prefect system the older pupils are also finding out the importance of service and supporting and helping fellow pupils. This programme also helps the pupils begin to understand their role as a citizen.
23. Opportunities for spiritual development remain satisfactory as at the last inspection and teachers use special events for individuals and for groups to help the pupils to focus on the value and importance of such events and the beliefs that support them. Older pupils are actively learning about such ideas in more structured ways, especially in religious education. The pupils' spiritual awareness is also developed through assemblies, which this term are based on the theme of light. Most assemblies during the week focused on the forthcoming Hindu festival of Diwali. During a mathematics lesson on symmetry, the class teacher created an atmosphere of wonder as she used a mirror to create pictures of butterflies. A display of the work of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed that the pupils were given the opportunity to develop insight into important values and beliefs; for example, one pupil had written about her friend, 'We never argue, she is honest and truthful'. Being part of an ECO school, the pupils are given the opportunity to develop a strong feeling for the environment and recognise the importance of conservation. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a strong relationship with the local church and the pupils celebrate Christian festivals such as, Harvest and Christmas, in the church.
24. Currently, six assemblies take place during the week in the hall, three for each key stage and include an appropriate act of collective worship. However, on the days when classes do not have an assembly in the hall, no specific time is made for collective worship, except for the class prayer and therefore it does not meet fully the statutory requirements. The pupils in most classes say a prayer together at the end of the day but this does not sufficiently encourage the pupils to explore ideas about meaning, values and beliefs.
25. The moral and social development of the pupils is good. Through personal, health and social lessons (PHSE) and in other areas of the curriculum, the pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. This provision is strong and well co-ordinated. Several PHSE lessons were observed during the inspection and in all cases, a moral thread ran through the lesson. One lesson on vandalism was particularly effective in drawing out ideas on this subject from the children. School assemblies are also used effectively to promote a moral message, and in most classrooms, teachers effectively follow this up. Most pupils responded well to this good provision.
26. The school provides the pupils with many opportunities to develop their social skills. The pupils are taught to take responsibility for keeping classrooms tidy and for putting their books and resources neatly away after lessons. In the classroom, the pupils are given many opportunities for

speaking and listening and a PHSE lesson was effectively used to demonstrate the importance of 'body language' when communicating with other people. Most pupils respond well to this good provision, which is supporting the pupils in developing their positive attitudes and behaviour.

27. The pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They are introduced to a range of past and present cultures through their work in history, geography, art, music, dance and religious education. In English, the pupils become knowledgeable about books and authors. The recent arrival of the French Assistants who spends three days a week in the school is doing much to help the pupils understand the life and culture of another European country. The school provides breadth to the curriculum, in support of teaching and learning, with a variety of carefully chosen day visits in the local area and beyond, such as visiting Port Sunlight and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Community links make a very good contribution to the teaching and learning in the school. Many visitors and parents are invited into school, often on a regular basis, to work with the pupils. A local artist helped the pupils design and produce well executed murals around the playground reflecting the school's environmental work. The school has developed very good links with the local church and the pupils and parents are involved in many church activities. The school also involves the pupils in local and national projects, such as healthy eating, the children's parliament award and is a registered ECO School. It has worked closely with 'Ground Work Wirral' to improve the school as a learning resource and amenity. All these projects have been carefully chosen to add breadth and richness to the curriculum. These activities, but particularly the ECO project, are a strength of the school and bring a strong sense of relevance to the pupils' learning. They have helped to plan and develop the school grounds, for example, establishing plants and collecting organic material for composting.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The procedures for child protection and welfare are good. The teachers and support staff, provide a high degree of care for all pupils. The day-to-day welfare provision for children at the school is particularly strong and is effectively co-ordinated by the headteacher. In the classroom, teachers and classroom assistants are alert to any problems that the pupils may have. The school, with regular assistance from outside agencies, monitors levels of individual pupil absence and lateness; the promotion and improvement of higher attendance levels is not as strong. The school has effective procedures for monitoring health and safety in the school and the governors play an important part in this. Assessment procedures are well managed. The co-ordinator has worked hard to clarify and develop the whole process. She has a good understanding of the needs of the school and a clear sense of direction and gives good support to her colleagues.
29. The pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the staff who know the pupils well and are committed to helping them achieve their personal targets. A particular strength is the way in which pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported and helped to overcome their difficulties. There are good procedures in place for monitoring the pupils' with special educational needs academic progress and personal development. Statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out. There are good arrangements in place to make effective use of support from external agencies. The staff in the nursery and reception classes provide a very effective level of support for the children with special educational needs, who are identified early through testing, and are fully integrated into school life.
30. The school prides itself on the work it does to promote healthy eating and living. This was clearly seen in the morning sale of fruit by and for pupils and the pleasant and well-supported breakfast club. Aspects of different subjects focus upon other areas of healthy living in a positive and sensitive way.
31. Very good reward systems are in place to encourage good behaviour and work at school. For example, the pupils enjoy the systems that allow them to earn an element of 'Golden Time' at the end of the school week. This provision was observed to work effectively during the inspection and is clearly liked by children and has a positive impact on their behaviour. The pupils' work and

personal development is monitored well by the school and steps are taken to identify individual problems.

32. The school uses an informal entry assessment procedure for the children entering the nursery, which is completed with the help of parents. This gives the members of the nursery staff a clear knowledge of what to expect from the children when they enter the nursery. They use this knowledge effectively to plan future work on the basis of what the children know, understand and can do.
33. The school has well-established procedures for assessment in English, mathematics and science; these effectively make a positive contribution towards the pupils' achievements. The school has satisfactorily addressed the key issue raised in the last inspection; assessment data is now collected and is more effectively used to inform curriculum planning, although in a few lessons, the teachers' planning still does not take sufficient account of the differing abilities within the group. The pupils are assessed on entry to the school and this information is taken into account when planning their activities. Results of national tests are analysed for strengths, weaknesses and trends. The school has produced a useful guide, which collates information from a number of different sources, and which helps teachers to make an accurate analysis of the pupils' standards. Literacy and numeracy targets are set termly and are used as a basis for planning. Opportunities for assessment are identified in teachers' plans. Results of voluntary national tests are used to provide further information in English and mathematics, but not as yet in science, although the school plans to address this. In addition, teachers make regular assessments at the end of units of work.
34. All information is transferred through the school as the pupils change classes, which gives the teachers an early view of standards and the opportunity to plan accordingly. The information is used to set annual targets for the pupils and progress towards these targets is carefully monitored. At this stage, the targets are based on National Curriculum levels; the school is aware that this needs to be extended, so that targets are specific to the pupils' needs and short-term steps can be identified. Teachers will then be able to plan more specific learning programmes and the pupils will get a better sense of their own learning and know what they need to do in order to improve. Currently, the information is used to create teaching sets, which is helping to raise standards, but there needs to be greater emphasis on targeting differing ability levels within each set.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The parents' views of the school are very good, as are the school's links with the parents. The parents are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. The parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. The parents also feel that the teaching is good and that the school is well managed. A few parents feel that the school does not provide sufficient opportunities for the children outside of lessons. The inspection evidence found that overall there was a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons, although they agree with parents that these are mostly for older pupils. The information provided by the school for parents through the prospectus, annual report to the parents and via regular newsletters is of a high standard. Whilst the annual school reports cover the areas that a child has been studying, the target areas for development are not always expressed in sufficient detail to provide a clear picture of what the child needs to do to improve. In the foundation stage classes, many parents use the opportunities they have to liaise regularly with teachers through a reading record book.
36. Overall, the school works well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are invited to the regular reviews of the progress their children are making and are kept informed as to the targets set for their children. Although parents are invited by the school to discuss the targets that are set in the pupils' individual education plans they do not always take up this opportunity offered by the school. However, most of the parents of pupils with behavioural problems are very supportive of the school. This helps their children to make good progress in achieving the targets in their individual plans to improve their behaviour.

37. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement that is designed to promote improved relationships between the school, the parents and the children. The school operates an 'open door' policy and the headteacher is very involved in developing further the already very good relationship between the parents and the school. Some parents and volunteers run the school's 'Coffee Bar' as a breakfast club for the pupils and this converts into a very effective community resource during the school day. During the inspection this provision was used for a training course for classroom assistants and is also used by parents and for community use. The parents who wish to enhance their own computer skills also use the new ICT suite. Many parents have also been involved in the ECO projects that have been a feature of the school over recent years and which are an outstanding example of the way in which the school promotes a very effective partnership with both the parents and the local community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The headteacher, together with the deputy-headteacher and senior staff with management responsibilities, provide good leadership. They work as an effective team and are supported well by the other members of staff, in their commitment to raise standards. The school has clear aims and has a positive commitment to raising standards. These aims are now more achievable since the school has established effective procedures for assessing pupils' standards and achievements and monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. As a result the quality of teaching has improved. These assessment procedures, particularly in English, mathematics and science, allow the management team, the governors and the teachers to evaluate the progress the pupils are making and to set appropriate and more challenging targets for improvement. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively and the school has identified that standards in writing and mathematics are not high enough and have included these as issues in their School Improvement Plan.

39. The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher and provide effective support for the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well. They have improved their knowledge of how well the school is achieving and appropriate management procedures are in place. The headteacher and governors use their results of the monitoring of the school's performance to set clear targets for development. The chair of the governors meets with the headteacher regularly and governors visit the school. This ensures that they have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has agreed a Performance Management Policy for appraising the work of the headteacher and other teachers.

40. The school's educational priorities are well supported by the school's effective system of financial planning. The headteacher and governors have established an appropriate budgeting cycle, which targets the priorities in the school development plan. The school applies the principles of best value very well, exemplified by the careful records kept on energy conservation. When making spending decisions, the school decides on the best alternative, not necessarily the cheapest. Value for money judgements are made about particular expenditures, for example, the improvement in the pupils' standards following the provision of the computer suite and the impact on music following the acquisition of a moveable piano. The impact of expenditure on the school grounds has resulted in the improved values, attitudes and knowledge of the pupils.

41. Specific grants are well targeted at their appropriate purposes, for instance the New Opportunities Fund is used for a study skills project for older junior pupils and money for land development has resulted in exciting environmental projects. New technology is used effectively in providing support for monitoring budget expenditure, for general administrative duties and increasingly throughout the curriculum. The bursar and administrative officer provide good support in assisting the school to meet its targets.

42. There is an acting special educational needs co-ordinator who has worked hard to develop the school's policy and overall approach to special educational needs. The school's plan for improvement has clearly identified the need to establish the new statutory requirements for special educational provision and the ways in which it will check to see what needs to be done and how it will be carried out. Teachers are aware of procedures for identifying, assessing and

providing for the pupils with special educational needs and parents know who are their main points of contact in the school. The governing body is supportive of, and has a good over view of the work done by the school with the pupils with special educational needs.

43. The leadership in the foundation stage is good. Throughout the school, the teachers and teaching assistants form an effective team who work extremely well together. At present the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator supports the smooth running of infant classes and Year 3, the Key Stage 2 role is carried out effectively by the deputy-headteacher. The subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and hard working. In English and mathematics, the subject co-ordinators play a prominent role in developing their subjects across the school. This is developing in science. They are actively involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning, setting targets for pupils and in scrutinising and improving teachers' planning. In other subjects, the co-ordinators are establishing appropriate policies and schemes of work, linked to national guidelines. The ICT co-ordinator has effectively developed appropriate support and guidance for teachers in developing this subject. The school is providing support and guidance for colleagues and in some cases they monitor the teachers' planning. In some subjects, including English and mathematics, the co-ordinators have opportunities to evaluate pupils' progress by scrutinising the pupils' workbooks and discussing with the pupils their work. The subject co-ordinators, other than for English, mathematics and science, do not have a clear idea of the standards attained as they have little opportunity to monitor the pupils' standards and assessment procedures are limited.
44. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified staff to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and to meet the needs of all pupils. The number of support staff is good. In the foundation stage, the level of staffing is good, and support staff make a very valuable input into the education of these young children. Student, parent and other voluntary helpers enhance provision. Teachers also work closely with teachers at the next stage of the children's education to continue to develop the current good practice. All members of staff ensure that the children have full and equal access to all areas of development. The teachers have a good balance of expertise and experience. The school staff work effectively as a team and they are well supported by a wide range of classroom assistants, some of whom are also able to provide welfare and first aid. In most classrooms, these assistants are well deployed and used effectively to support children in their lessons. The school has recently acquired the Investors in People Award and all staff are very much valued and supported as part of this initiative. The induction arrangements for new staff are good. The school has satisfactory arrangements for meeting the professional needs of the staff in English, mathematics and science and the training is linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan, which is supporting the improvements in standards.
45. The school accommodation is good and the establishment of a library and an ICT suite has improved the effective delivery of the curriculum since the last inspection. There is a secure area for outdoor activities, which is used by the nursery and reception children. The school is situated on a large site with well-cared for premises and grounds. The school's site manager maintains it well. The pupils' work is attractively displayed in the corridors. The provision for outdoor sport is satisfactory and a local swimming pool is used for lessons by Years 3, 4 and 5. The school hall is too small to allow the whole school to meet for assembly but it is well utilised as a dining room and for physical education lessons for all children.
46. The quality of class libraries is variable across the school. The best are well organised and have attractive book corners. However, elsewhere, class libraries are poorly organised with few attractive books to encourage readers. The school library has improved since the last inspection and is now a well-furnished and inviting resource. However, it is restricted to non-fiction and during the inspection insufficient use was made of the library to develop the skills of research and referencing. The local library, which is adjacent to the school, very effectively supports the school in encouraging the pupils to become more involved in reading.
47. Overall, learning resources are adequate in nearly all subjects. ICT resources are very good and have improved significantly since the last inspection, with the number of computers and the multi media projector and an interactive board allowing effective whole class lessons. In music, resources have been improved recently, but there are not enough tuned percussion instruments.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to raise the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher and staff need to:

- (1) Improve standards in writing by:
 - Providing sufficient opportunities for sustained writing in which to develop and refine the pupils' writing skills both in English and in other subjects. (paragraph 62)

- (2) Improve standards in mathematics by:
 - Ensure that all teachers have high expectations of what could be achieved by the pupils;
 - Ensure all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve;
 - Improve, where necessary, the teachers' planning so that it takes account of the differing abilities within the groups. (paragraphs 67-72)

Minor issues

- Make more strenuous efforts to improve pupils' attendance. (paragraph 28)
- Ensure there is an effective daily act of collective worship. (paragraph 24)
- Monitoring and assessment of standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. (paragraph 34, 43)
- Provide appropriate time for work in art, design technology, geography, history, music and physical education. (paragraph 18)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	78
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	14	36	24	4	0	0
Percentage	0	18	46	31	5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

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)	15	314
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	192

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18	163

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	28	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	27
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	49	52	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (86)	88 (95)	90 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	90 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	25
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	51	52	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (89)	88 (95)	85 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	23	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	9	20
	Girls	22	21	23
	Total	36	30	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (74)	70 (44)	100 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	15
	Girls	22	20	21
	Total	33	32	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (49)	74 (44)	84 (65)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	2
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	270

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.5
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	695621
Total expenditure	692376
Expenditure per pupil	1995
Balance brought forward from previous year	22082
Balance carried forward to next year	25748

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	392
Number of questionnaires returned	145

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	38	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	52	45	1	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	43	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	42	6	0	3
The teaching is good.	64	33	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	44	8	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	31	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	33	3	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	60	37	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	35	9	2	8

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

49. The provision for the children in the foundation stage remains good as it was at the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

50. Staff in the nursery and reception classes put a great emphasis on the children's personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is good and often very good. Consequently most children are likely to attain the expected levels in the development of their personal, social and emotional skills by the time they leave the reception class. As a result they make very good progress. Most children come happily into the nursery and the reception classes and settle quickly into the secure and caring classes. The children in the nursery are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They settle quickly to the well-established routines and soon learn to find their name with their parent when they come to school and put it onto a board as a self registering process; by the time they are in the reception classes this has become an automatic procedure. They thrive in the stimulating, caring and secure environment and soon learn to relate well to adults and each other. Most children are confident when moving around the nursery and make considered choices when selecting activities. In general, they sustain good concentration for a reasonable length of time on chosen tasks, and very few 'flit' between them. They share and take turns amicably, for example, when looking at books, doing puzzles and in role play.
51. The children clearly enjoy their work in the nursery. They co-operate happily with each other and adults. The children take care of classroom equipment and quickly learn to tidy up after themselves. This good level of interest, enthusiasm and co-operation continues as the children move to the reception year. They increase their ability to concentrate and to co-operate. For example, one child was helping another to take his jumper off when changing for physical education. Most children work well both independently and together, and many are developing the ability to work on their own even when not directly supervised. Most children persevere to finish their tasks and take pride in their work. The reception teachers encourage the children to develop a sense of responsibility, for example, on a rota basis the children take the register to the office. The children quickly adapt to the routines of school life and move quietly and confidently around the school. Staff constantly reinforce good habits, such as encouraging children to put up their hands when answering questions or making comments, and make sure that the children tidy up after activities.

Communication, language and literacy

52. When they enter the nursery, a significant number of the children have poorly developed speech and the development of their communication, language and literacy skills is given a high priority. Due to the good and often very good teaching, most children are likely to reach the expected levels of attainment in this area of their development by the time they leave the reception classes. In the nursery most children make good progress. They enjoy looking at books and quickly understand that pictures and print convey meaning as they listen to very well read stories and rhymes. The children who have limited vocabulary receive a good level of individual help and support to increase their speaking skills. The children learn to hold and use pencils correctly. The members of the nursery staff give all the children a wide range of activities, such as tracing, that improve their hand and eye control and increase their early writing skills. This good rate of learning and progress continues as the children move into their reception year. The children with special educational needs continue to receive effective support and the staff are assessing the needs of the two children, who are at a very early stage of learning English, who joined the school during the inspection. The reception class teachers are beginning to adapt and use the literacy strategy well to meet the developing needs of these young children. This effectively develops further the children's listening, speaking and reading skills and especially their knowledge of letter sounds. The teachers choose books and stories carefully to increase the children's interest in reading. All adults in the reception class use

precise and clear diction to assist the children's speech. They encourage the children to speak clearly in sentences. Most children consolidate and develop their early writing skills well. They hold and use pencils correctly and most make very good attempts at writing their own names. A few of the older, quicker learning children are beginning, with assistance, to write words in simple sentences.

Mathematical development

53. The provision for the children's mathematical development is good. Most children, by the time they leave the reception classes, are on line to meet the expectations for the children of their age. Most children make good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills. The members of the nursery staff develop these skills very effectively through a carefully planned range of activities. They use everyday occurrences, objects and toys to make number work relevant for the children. An example of this is the regular activity of counting the number of the children present and the number of adults in the classroom at registration. The children in their creative activities, such as framing their photographs with cut out paper shapes, become familiar with two-dimensional shapes, such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. All children learn and sing simple number rhymes. The children enter the reception year with a developing range of mathematical concepts and the reception teachers continue to build on and develop these early skills well. In one lesson, for example, most children count up to ten objects confidently and a significant minority count beyond this, for instance when counting the number of paper 'bricks' they had cut out for Humpty Dumpty's wall in their pictures. The quicker learning pupils matched numerals to the objects they had counted and also estimated an irregular arrangement of objects accurately. In addition to developing their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes, pupils are beginning to name three-dimensional shapes such as cylinders. The teaching is good and often very good. Teachers and assistants take every opportunity to advance learning and make it interesting. For example, one teacher used finger puppets to help the children add two numbers up to ten; this gave them great enjoyment in their learning.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

54. The school provides very well for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children are in line to meet the expectations for the children their age at the end of their reception year. Teaching is good and often very good as teachers provide many interesting activities to develop this area of learning. The children have many opportunities in the nursery and the reception classes to explore the natural and man-made world in the development of their scientific skills. For example, the children in the nursery know that 'if we put pasta in the water it goes soft'. They look at clothes and identify in which weather they might be worn and develop their vocabulary by suggesting the materials are 'crinkly', 'soundy' and 'see through'. The children in reception tried to identify objects through feeling them, and through looking at the shadow they make, as part of their work on the senses. They study and make daily observations of the weather and develop their mapping skills after a walk to the shops. Most know where they live and some talk about where they have been on holiday. They develop their design and making skills well through, for instance, building different objects using large plastic shapes. Most children use computers as a matter of routine to help with their mathematical and language work. Many use the mouse adeptly.

Physical development

55. The school makes good provision for the children's physical development. Most children, by the time they leave the reception classes, are likely to meet, and in many cases, surpass the expectations for the children their age. They have access to a suitably wide range of tools such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue from the beginning of their time in the nursery. By the time they leave the nursery, most children are controlling these tools well. In the hall, the children in the nursery walk, run and jump at different speeds with a good awareness of space, and respond well to the teacher's instructions and signals. They use wheeled vehicles outside with good control. The children in the reception class continue to develop their physical skills well. They warm up through stretching and curling and running, jumping and skipping activities, with a very good awareness of the space, skilfully avoiding collisions with other the

children. They recognise that exercise causes their hearts to 'bump'. They travel around, under, over and through large apparatus with growing confidence, practising and refining their movements. For example, one child worked very hard with great concentration to find the best way to get over the climbing frame. Teaching is good and frequently very good as teachers give the children the opportunity to explore, experiment and refine their actions in a safe and calm environment.

Creative development

56. The school's provision for the children's creative development is good and most children are likely to meet the level of skill necessary to reach, at least, the expectations for the children their age by the time they leave the reception classes. The children learn basic techniques in the nursery and make very good progress due to the good and often very good teaching. This enables them to use and control materials effectively. They hold brushes correctly and apply paint to paper with much confidence. The children mix paint to achieve different colours. They experiment confidently with paint, printing with different objects such as the soles of shoes and sponges to make colourful patterns. They sing a variety of songs from memory. In the reception classes the children continue to develop confidence in using a suitably wide range of media and equipment. Most children show a good awareness of shape, pattern and colour. They make portraits of themselves from wool, paper and other materials. Opportunities are made for the children to express their ideas and feelings through imaginative play, for instance, in the well-equipped Hairdressers' Shop.

ENGLISH

57. Standards have made a good improvement since the last inspection and are now above average for both seven and 11-year-olds, as indicated in the results of the 2001 national tests, and well above average when compared with similar schools. Standards are better in reading than writing. The attainment of boys and girls is not significantly different.
58. Inspection findings match the school's lower target for the present 11-year-olds and therefore do not reflect the test results. Standards seen were average for both seven and 11-year-olds. As in the national tests, standards are better in reading than in writing but this difference is slightly more marked for the 11-year-old pupils. However, the infant and junior pupils achieve well compared to their below average attainment on entry to the school. The pupils with special needs and those with a statement of special educational need also make good progress due to the good teaching they receive and the support they get from the teaching assistants. The gifted and talented pupils identified by the school also make good progress.
59. At both key stages the quality of speaking and listening is average. The pupils are encouraged to discuss ideas in the Literacy Hour, such as when Year 4 pupils were comparing characters in a drama script. This improves their confidence and raises the standard of their speaking skills. Drama is used effectively to enable the pupils to develop their communication skills, as is the case in a Year 6 lesson, when the pupils wrote and acted out their version from a scene in Romeo and Juliet to explore the theme of conflict. Their use of vocabulary in different subjects is not always secure, as was demonstrated when pupils were using geographical vocabulary in a discussion about rivers.
60. Standards in reading are above average for both seven and 11-year-olds, which indicates very good improvement from the below average standard on entry to the school. Infant pupils have a good grasp of phonic skills and use this knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words successfully. The implementation of the National Literacy strategy and, in particular, the word and sentence work, has provided a good framework for the pupils to develop their phonic skills. For those pupils who do not make the expected, progress, the Reading Rescue programme and special educational needs support, are used effectively to develop their reading skills. By the age of 11, most of the pupils read fluently, with confidence and with expression; some are very knowledgeable about books and authors. They use computers to research information about authors.

61. Standards of writing at the age of seven are average. Spelling is satisfactory and reflects the secure understanding of phonics built up through word work in the Literacy Hour. The work in their books shows many of the pupils developing sound story writing skills, though in some books the stories are comparatively short and are not lively enough to hold the reader's interest. Few stories show a distinct beginning, middle and end. Handwriting is neat and fluent with some examples of very high quality in Year 2. At the age of 11, standards of writing are average but few pupils in the present Year 6 are achieving higher standards. Spelling is satisfactory; most of the pupils use their knowledge of spelling patterns effectively. Handwriting is satisfactory with many of the older pupils developing a legible, personal style. The range of writing is good and includes diaries, instructions, letters and curriculum vitae. Year 6 pupils produced some good writing based on the story of Scrooge. Most of the pupils handle dialogue well, using a variety of verbs and adverbs appropriately matched to the plot and the action. However, a significant minority of the Year 6 pupils lack fluency in their written work and do not produce sufficient sustained writing in which to develop and refine their writing skills. For example, characters in the stories are not developed sufficiently and their relevance to the plot is not clear. In some cases, the story starts off well with a good opening that draws you into story but the plot does not develop and tails off. Across the key stage opportunities for sustained writing in other subjects are not always grasped.
62. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is reflected in the good progress the pupils make. The teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy, plan with confidence and make good use of resources such as Big Books and other shared texts to capture the pupils' interest. This provides an effective basis for developing vocabulary, phonics, grammar, punctuation, literacy style and the effect of a text on the reader. In a very good Year 4 lesson, the teacher's skilful questioning enabled the pupils to show and develop their understanding of the conventions of a play script while talking about the aspects they find difficult to understand. Lessons usually begin with a clear indication of what will be learned and often include a reference to previous lessons. This helps the pupils to focus appropriately on the purpose of the lesson. Teaching assistants support the teaching of literacy well and they guide and support the pupils effectively in their learning. Behaviour management is a strength of most teachers and support staff and good relationships are established in each classroom. This enables teachers to employ a variety of teaching strategies and receive an enthusiastic response from the pupils towards shared texts, associated tasks and drama activities. The school is beginning to develop the use of computers, for example, using alphabet games, using the dictionary and thesaurus to search for alternative words. Some pupils record presentations linked to their discussion work in their personal and social education lessons. The pupils' attitudes to English are good throughout the school. Nearly all pupils enjoy their English lessons, work hard, behave well and are motivated to learn. They respond well to the tasks set by their teachers and listen attentively to the class teacher's explanations. The pupils thrive on the praise and encouragement they receive from their teachers and this has a positive effect on their learning and their self-esteem.
63. The assessment of the pupils' standards and achievement in lessons is satisfactory and good procedures have been developed to track the pupils' progress across the years and to set appropriate targets. In one Year 6 class, for example, work is carefully analysed and annotated to show the stage the pupils are at and what is needed to be done for individual pupils to improve. However, in some lessons, the targets the pupils are given are rather vague, such as, 'improve the quality of vocabulary used' or there are too many targets set. Good portfolios are in place with appropriate samples of work showing the individual progress of the pupils. The standard of marking is generally good, with comments explaining how the work could be improved and acknowledging when improvement has taken place.
64. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily across the school. Classroom displays frequently include key vocabulary and an explanation of important terms. This is particularly evident in science. Curriculum displays around the school are annotated and often include suitable examples of pupils' work, such as, descriptions about visits to Port Sunlight and why individual pupils want to be school prefects.

65. The subject co-ordinator has played an effective part in raising the standards and has a clear vision of what needs to be done. Good use has been made of in-service training opportunities and additional funding to secure the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which is helping to raise attainment across the school. The subject leader and senior staff are aware of the need to raise standards in writing and are looking at ways of further refining and tracking the pupils' progress in writing and the future learning steps needed for them to make progress. There are regular visits from the local children's librarian to give talks on books, authors and poetry

MATHEMATICS

66. The work seen during the inspection gives a similar picture to the most recent national test results; 7 year-olds attain average standards and 11 year-olds below average standards. When compared to similar schools, 7 year-olds attained well above average standards and 11 year-olds above average standards. Although, standards have improved significantly, especially for the oldest pupils, they could be higher; the pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English and science. The teachers do not always expect enough of the average and more-able pupils and this limits their overall achievement.
67. Since the last inspection, the school has put in place the National Numeracy Strategy, together with a consistent system to check how well the pupils are doing in mathematics. The results of standardised tests are being analysed and from the information gained, the pupils are grouped according to their abilities in lessons so that the work can be better matched to their needs. Targets are set for groups of pupils and the pupils take home information about their targets. However, the school does not yet make it clear to all the pupils what they need to do to improve, neither do the pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next level of the National Curriculum. The time given to the teaching of mathematics has been increased, although the way that the extra lesson is used varies throughout the school. It is most successful where the teachers plan for opportunities for the pupils to use and apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in a previous lesson, to solve problems.
68. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons, they are happy to offer answers to questions and to try to explain how and why they have reached an answer, although in some classes opportunities to do this are limited. The pupils concentrate and work well, both independently and in small groups. They count and calculate accurately. The pupils are given opportunities to use skills of estimation, and to solve problems using all four numerical operations.
69. By the time they are seven, the pupils have some understanding of place value, they are able to count in 2s, 5s and 10s and the most able can divide by 2,5, and 10. They do not all know their number bonds securely to 20 but are able to recognise whether a number is odd or even. The more able pupils can count forwards and backwards in threes and identify the missing numbers from a sequence. The pupils recognise two-dimensional shapes and can identify the properties that each one has. As the pupils move through Key Stage 2 they are able to work with larger numbers and the most able can multiply and divide by ten and a hundred using two decimal places. The pupils do not all know their times tables up to 10 X 10 but they understand the process of multiplication and that division is the inverse of multiplication. They know the names and properties of different sorts of triangles such as isosceles and scalene. The pupils can find and justify probabilities in simple situations. They are beginning to understand and use ratios in calculations and to solve problems. The pupils can confidently use co-ordinates in the first quadrant and during the inspection were beginning a unit of work on learning to use all four quadrants.
70. Overall, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good. Of the twelve lessons seen the teaching was good or better in eight of them. There were no lessons in which the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching has some significant strengths. The teachers have a clear understanding and knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and they teach the basic skills of mathematics well. Where the better teaching was seen the teachers had good class

management skills and high expectations of the pupils' abilities to concentrate well, to recall and apply their knowledge of number facts and to explain how they had solved number problems. In the best lessons the teachers challenged the pupils to extend their understanding and learn new numeracy skills and this enabled the pupils to make good progress. The teachers plan homework for the pupils that usually supports work being done in class; it is given regularly and checked on its return by the teachers. The use of computers is developing to assist the pupils' learning, for example, in recognising and using numbers.

71. The teaching has a number of weaknesses. In some lessons, the rate of progress is slower because the teachers have low expectations of what could be achieved by the pupils. The teachers' planning does not take sufficient account of the differing abilities within the group and the teachers do not provide opportunities for all of the pupils to contribute, or for the pupils' understanding to be checked. The pace of the lessons is much the same throughout which results in the pupils not being challenged and stimulated by the mental and oral start, or having sufficient time to work through examples independently. It discourages the pupils from developing independence in their learning and from using their knowledge of their own learning to solve problems.
72. There are two subject managers for mathematics. They ensure that the school is making use of the information from analysing the results of the national and other tests to group the pupils and to set targets. They are eager to continue to raise the standards of achievement in mathematics but whilst there have been good opportunities for them to check how well other teachers are teaching and to decide what needs improving, these have been fewer more recently because of staff absence. They are supportive of their colleagues in suggesting ways in which topics can be taught, and in ensuring that each class has an adequate range of resources. In all the classes, and around the school, there are interesting and interactive displays that are generally well used to show the learning that has taken place. Only one class displayed the overall targets that the pupils are working towards and not all teachers made it clear to the pupils what they would be learning in the lesson.

SCIENCE

73. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection. All pupils achieved at least the average standard in the 2001 national tests for 11-year-olds. Standards overall were broadly in line with the national average and were very good in comparison with similar schools. There has been little difference between the performance of boys and girls during this time, although girls have achieved slightly better results. Teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that the pupils attain above average standards at the expected level 2 and well above at the higher level 3. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Given the below average attainment on entry to school, the pupils' achievement throughout the infants and juniors is good, including those pupils who have special educational needs.
74. Standards are average for both the current seven and 11-years-olds. In Year 6 the pupils know the main parts and functions of flowers and plants and understand the conditions needed for the germination of plants. Their annotated drawings are well produced as they confidently describe the process of seed dispersal. Above average pupils describe the process of conducting an experiment, but their understanding of fair testing is basic for their age. Their recall of earlier work on electric circuits is sound. Current work on the circulatory system is well learned and the pupils demonstrate a good level of knowledge. In this work, they retain information well and use appropriate vocabulary accurately. Seven-year-old pupils are able to name the parts of the body. They are developing an understanding of the need for a healthy diet, as they describe that food is needed for growth, energy and good health.
75. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The best teaching was well planned and delivered energetically, which engaged the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The teachers' methods, including direct teaching, role-play and research, were particularly successful in Year 6 lessons about the circulatory system. The pupils responded well to these varied approaches, which encouraged understanding and reinforced the acquisition of essential knowledge and

vocabulary. Hence, the pupils used appropriate words, such as plasma, platelets, white cells, arteries and veins, accurately. Lessons are well planned and have a good structure. Teachers give clear instructions, so the pupils know what is expected of them and what they are to do. Good questioning techniques assess the pupils' understanding, so that the pupils receive clarification when they need it. This enhances their understanding and helps them to remain on task. Investigative work was well carried out in Year 5, as the pupils learned about solids, liquids, gases and reversible change. The pupils enjoyed the practical activities. A strength of the teaching in Year 1 was the calm, purposeful and measured approach, which resulted in a correspondingly high level of behaviour and self-discipline by the children. In the resulting atmosphere, the pupils conducted their investigation into light sources and good learning took place. The pupils' previous work shows that throughout the school they generally complete the same activities. Below average pupils are supported in their lessons and are often required to record their work at a more basic level. Tasks, which are more specifically designed to match the needs of different levels of ability, would provide more challenge, especially for the above average pupils, who could do better.

76. Changes since the previous inspection include the adaptation of the scheme of work, so that the required elements of the science curriculum are taught more frequently. The allocation of time has been audited and monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject has improved. The collation of assessment data allows teachers to set targets year-on-year. These developments, reflected in a realistic action plan, have had a positive impact on standards and progress in the subject. Computers are now beginning to be used for a variety of purposes. The pupils research information about the heart, skeleton and circulation when study the human body. Other pupils record their scientific findings in tables that are then analysed and printed. The achievement of ECO School status had a positive impact on the pupils' learning and understanding in relation to the environment. Hence, they have a heightened awareness of the impact of pollution and waste on the environment. They also understand the need to improve the environment in its widest sense, so that the environment will not be damaged for future generations.
77. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. He has produced an action plan, which includes the development of the assessment arrangements already in place, including voluntary national tests. This will provide more essential information to allow teachers to plan a wider range of activities and will encourage development at all levels of ability. Although experiments are carried out, it is important that this approach is developed, so that the acquisition of skills may be applied independently by the pupils as these could be higher.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Standards are average for both seven and 11-year-olds, as they were at the last inspection.
79. In the one lesson observed, the Year 2 pupils were looking at the work of David Hockney and in particular the colours he favoured and his geometric designs. They used a variety of materials such as pastels, felt tip pens and pencil crayons to experiment and develop the same colour effects and shapes they saw in the picture. Most of the pupils worked with good concentration and many were pleased with their good efforts. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good. The lesson was well planned with resources readily available in order to stimulate the pupils' imaginations and widen their experience. The teacher gave clear explanations and illustrations showing she had a good knowledge of the subject, which allowed the pupils to think more about how to improve their work. She gave the pupils the opportunity to experiment and continually encouraged them to appraise their work, consequently the quality of their finished work.
80. Work on display shows that the pupils frequently use their artistic skills to support their work in other subjects. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils had drawn and coloured some pictures in the style of William Morris as part of their history topic on the Victorians. These were very attractive and showed that a great deal of painstaking effort had gone into producing them. For their science work, they had made some detailed observational drawings of plants. Other work

also undertaken by these pupils included some well-executed copies of paintings in the style of Van Gogh in which they had used pastels very effectively to represent the colour and texture of, for example, sunflowers and portraits. Linked to their English work on the 'Iron Man', the pupils in Year 4 have designed individually and then in groups made chairs in their idea of the 'Iron Man'. These were of a high standard and very creative, and the pupils had investigated materials and processes well in their designs. Apart from this, very little work in three-dimensions was on display. The pupils use computers to develop their skills in art is at an early stage. Year 3 pupils used a program that combined text and graphics and other pupils used a program to create pictures in the style of Monet. Discussions with Year 6 pupils suggest that art does not have a high profile in the school; these pupils could not remember doing any work with clay since they were in the infants.

81. The new subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has written an appropriate action plan indicating how she would like to see art developing throughout the school. In this, she has made as her first priority updating the policy in line with the latest requirements, and developing new planning aids for teachers so that they build on the pupils' skills progressively as the pupils move through the school. She monitors the pupils' work through observations of displays, sketch books and teachers' planning. The school has extended the pupils' awareness of art through visits from various artists, such as, developing weaving , linking poetry with works of art from local galleries and links with a project on the architecture of Port Sunlight.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. The pupils' work indicates that they are achieving average standards at seven and 11, which is similar to the last inspection, but standards could be higher if more time was available. The time available is limited to half an hour per week, which limits the depth that topics can be developed and the time available to extend pupils' ideas fully, with opportunities for the pupils to evaluate and modify their work. The school has adopted the national guidelines as the scheme of work and this has helped in raising standards, as has improved teacher knowledge. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
83. In a lesson, Year 3 pupils were researching the materials and techniques that they could use to make and decorate a package. The pupils used their plans to show what their package is to be used for, the materials to be used, the shape of the package and how they intend to decorate the package. They considered different forms of construction and decoration and they developed their skills well and through discussion and practical activity improved their knowledge of the techniques. Year 4 pupils were investigating and researching materials and techniques, which lead them to making a money container of their own. They considered such aspects as which materials provide the best structure and how the function of the container determines the materials and construction required. They had a satisfactory grasp of the construction involved. Year 5/6 pupils are beginning to find out about shelters. In one class, the pupils explored what shelters were and suggested a very wide range of different types. They then began to consider in greater detail one particular type of shelter. In another class, the teacher and pupils considered the effectiveness of umbrellas as a means of shelter. This led to an interesting discussion that demonstrated the pupils' good knowledge and understanding.
84. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers are now more confident and plan effectively. The teachers have secure subject knowledge, plan the work well and ensure that the pupils clearly understand what they have to do and what is expected of them. All lessons seen were the initial lesson of this half-term's work and concentrated on allowing the pupils to begin thinking about the various design and make activities that they were presented with. The tasks set are interesting and appropriate for the pupils; the pupils enjoy the tasks and persevere to complete them within the given time. The teachers set high standards, including behaviour. When discussing their work the pupils are interested, enthusiastic and reasonably knowledgeable. They are keen to explain how they produced their products and what they needed to take into consideration when designing and making. They talk about the processes involved and take a pride in their work.

85. The subject manager is enthusiastic and informed but has limited opportunities to monitor the pupils' work. The scheme of work ensures that planning is consistent across the classes. Effective planning exists in all classes. Individual teachers have worked hard to use the national guidelines to improve their understanding and the pupils' performance. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills but there is less evidence of literacy and numeracy skills as these are not planned for and the pupils' specialist subject vocabulary is not sufficiently well developed. The use of control technology in using computers is being developed but is at an early stage of development.

GEOGRAPHY

86. Standards are average for both seven and 11-year-olds, as they were at the last inspection and the infant and junior pupils achieve satisfactorily, including the progress of the pupils with special educational needs.
87. Seven-year-old pupils use their knowledge to identify simple map symbols and to produce plans of the classroom and of the school and use a key to explain it. Producing maps on a computer reinforces this work. This develops their mapping skills, such as, symbols. Using the information gained the pupils identify ways in which they can improve the school. A group of the oldest junior pupils demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of mapping skills, including the use of symbols and keys and the need for different scales in map making. They also use the computer to develop their skills in relation to plans and directions. However, their knowledge of using map references is underdeveloped for their age. In a study of rivers, the pupils showed a sound understanding of terms, such as source, mouth and delta, when describing a river, but had difficulty recalling some specific vocabulary, such as meander and tributary. They have carried out studies of the local area and through this they were able to identify some similarities and differences with a place in India. The pupils use an interactive atlas and route finder to extend their researches. Some pupils use a digital camera when finding out about their local environment.
88. A strength of the school its approach to involving the pupils in studying and caring for the environment by becoming an ECO school. This has made a significant impact on the pupils' attitudes. As a direct consequence, the pupils have a good awareness of the need to conserve and safeguard the environment both locally and world-wide. The pupils have definite views on ways of improving the environment and more able pupils clearly describe issues, such as recycling, composting and energy conservation.
89. The quality of teaching and learning is broadly satisfactory but there is some variation. The best lessons used a variety of resources and methods, which successfully engaged the pupils' interest and curiosity. In Years 5 and 6, for instance, the use of a French Assistant, to talk about her country, made a lively introduction to a study of the European Union. The pupils not only learned by listening; they formulated their own questions about particular points of interest. A range of suitable and interesting atlases, maps and specialised booklets enhanced subsequent learning. The pupils responded to the wide range of techniques in presenting information and learned that there are many ways of communicating essential facts. In Year 1, a well-prepared plan of the classroom, was used effectively to introduce the pupils to mapping skills. The pace of this lesson was good, and the involvement of the pupils in creating a plan on the white board, led to a greater understanding on their part. A feature of the successful lessons was the methods used to develop the pupils' skills, as witnessed in a Year 3 lesson on locating places. In this lesson, the pupils enthusiastically gathered information from the good range of maps provided. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson when unacceptable behaviour affected the pupils' learning.
90. The management of the subject is good. The subject co-ordinator is secure in knowledge and understanding. She plans to upgrade the current assessment practices and has the necessary documentation ready. The action plan identifies areas for development. The limited amount of time allocated makes it difficult to develop all aspects of the work in sufficient depth, such as more complex mapping skills. There also needs to be opportunities for more able pupils to

extend their studies in greater depth. Also, there is not sufficient emphasis given to the studying of other places, although this is helped by themed European, Indian and French days for Year 5/6 pupils that involves outside visitors and covers such aspects as food, music and art linked to the geography topics. The school is also in the process of developing email links with a school in Australia. The teachers should also concentrate on geographical vocabulary and ensure that the pupils retain and use it, both in written and spoken form.

HISTORY

91. Standards at age 7 and 11 are average and all of the pupils make good progress. The school has recently re-organised the teaching of history using the national guidelines and this ensures a good breadth of study of historical topics. The guidance provides opportunities for the pupils to study different aspects of the same topic more than once during their time at the school. However, the school does not ensure that it also includes details of how the pupils will build on what they have learned before and extend the opportunities for the pupils to develop higher skills of historical enquiry and understanding.
92. By the age of 7, the pupils have a sound sense of chronology. They make a personal timeline showing themselves as babies, toddlers, starting school and at the present. They learn about the role that Florence Nightingale played in modernising hospital care and consider if they would have liked to be a nurse in 1854. They understand that we can learn about the past by looking at pictures and artefacts. The Year 2 pupils put together ideas from evidence such as a man in 'old fashioned' clothes, a picture of a lamp and a plan of a building to learn about the role of Guy Fawkes in the Gunpowder Plot.
93. In Year 3 the pupils consider reasons for the Roman Invasion of Britain and how it would have felt to be a Roman soldier. They work from questions such as 'What did the Romans do for Britain?' and 'Why did the Romans leave?'. This enables them to think of reasons for the changes in society over time. The pupils in Years 4 learn about events in the history of the Ancient Greeks and compare the city states of Sparta and Athens. The more able pupils understand the differences between the political and social systems of Athens and Sparta. By the time they are eleven, the pupils look at a wider range of sources to gather information about historical topics. Their skills in literacy and information and communication technology are well used and extended by the subject. They research using the 1841 census to compare life in New Ferry now with life in Victorian times and they study the development of Port Sunlight. The pupils are interested in history; they enjoy talking about what they have learned and organising their work to present to others. However, their understanding that some changes, events and people have been variously interpreted is more limited and they are not yet able to suggest reasons for this. The pupils can select and link information from a variety of sources but they do not evaluate the sources or have opportunities to select those relevant to specific questions because they have too little time. Computers are at an early stage of development to support the pupils' learning but the pupils use a digital camera and video extracts linked to their local history study.
94. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of the teaching was good and the pupils made good progress. The teachers have a good knowledge of the history they are teaching, they introduce the topics in a lively and interesting way and provide activities that give the pupils opportunities to learn about characteristics of past periods and societies and events and people involved in them. They manage the pupils well and ensure that they concentrate and try hard with their work. The pupils' learning at both key stages is extended well by visits out of school and visitors to the school. The school has begun to check how well the pupils understand historical issues and events by a 'can do' sheet. In addition the teachers provide the next teacher with a piece of work which demonstrates each pupil's knowledge and understanding of the topic covered.
95. The subject manager is enthusiastic and well informed. She checks the teachers' planning to see how history is being developed throughout the school and has observed a few lessons that is beginning to give her a better understanding of the standards being achieved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average for both seven and 11-year-olds. Whilst standards have been maintained since the last inspection, much progress has been made in the provision of computers and a computer suite. The school's self-assessment shows that the pupils were two years behind the required standard when the computer provision was upgraded two years ago. Consequently, progress in the last two years has been swift and the pupils' skills are much more securely established.
97. Eleven-year-old pupils have sound word processing skills, which are employed across the curriculum, for example, when they write character studies in English lessons. They also write both biographies and autobiographies. They are able to combine text and graphics, as shown in the production of greeting cards and the use of a digital camera. By programming instructions into the computer, they produce repeat patterns. Above average pupils demonstrate a good level of understanding of simulations and games, which they are able to access unaided. They have also acquired basic levels of competency when using a data-handling program. Seven years olds have competent word processing skills. They type with increasing dexterity and show satisfactory mouse control, when moving the cursor. They change letter size and style and use this information when combining text and graphics. Their understanding of map symbols improves by using a geography program. Given a below average level of attainment on entry to the school, current progress is good. The pupils with special educational needs are given good support and achieve well.
98. The quality of teaching and learning observed during was satisfactory overall but varied between very good and unsatisfactory. When teaching was satisfactory or better, teachers systematically taught the necessary skills using the multi media projector to aid access for all pupils. Teachers in these lessons either demonstrated good subject knowledge or used well-prepared guides to assist them. The pupils were sometimes used in the demonstrations, but all pupils paid careful attention, assimilated the information and successfully put the newly acquired skills into practice. When they encountered problems, teachers were quick to provide additional guidance. Hence, when Year 6 pupils were taught the basic principles of using spreadsheets, they quickly learned to manipulate information and input changes. Year 3 pupils quickly acquired the skills necessary to use an art package and combine text and graphics. The pupils generally have a good attitude towards the subject. They are keen to learn, follow instructions well and make good progress. When the quality of teaching and learning was unsatisfactory, teachers allowed the pupils' excitement to affect their behaviour. During these times, the lessons lost their sense of purpose and the quality of learning suffered.
99. Changes since the previous inspection have all been instrumental in improving standards and provision. The school has adopted nationally produced guidelines, and these have improved planned coverage and progression. Staff have received extra training, so that the level of teacher expertise and confidence has improved. The computer suite has provided a very good learning facility. The acquisition of a multi media projector and an interactive board has given teachers an invaluable aid in delivering whole class lessons. The school is about to embark on a pilot scheme to access an interactive electronic encyclopaedia. This demonstrates the school's commitment to being innovative in its determination to improve standards. The monitoring of standards has improved, and the co-ordinator now checks plans and teachers' evaluations and this is improving the consistency of teachers' planning.
100. The subject co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop the subject and her management is good. She is secure in her knowledge and understanding and has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in standards. She is aware that the use of control technology and the Internet require further development. The subject action plan includes the necessary development of current assessment procedures, in order to track progress and securely build on what has been previously learned.

MUSIC

101. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards overall of the seven and 11-year-olds as no lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 and only 4 lessons, focused principally on singing, were seen at Key Stage 2.
102. The pupils make satisfactory progress in their singing and, by the age of 11, standards are average. In a singing lesson for Years 5 and 6, the pupils singing shows clear diction, a reasonable control of pitch and satisfactory musical expression. A group of pupils performed the song "Alouette" unaccompanied confidently and with good expression. In a Year 5 and 6 class lesson, the pupils were listening to "Who will buy?" and, as a result of good questioning from the teacher, they were able to develop their understanding. They produced their own street calls satisfactorily, making them ready to put to music. In a Year 4 lesson, a pupil with a statement of special educational need, was well integrated into a lesson on traditional singing games and was able to make satisfactory progress due to the good support he received from the special educational needs assistant. In discussions with some Year 6 pupils, they show understanding of basic terms, such as 'rhythm' but have little understanding of notation and have only a limited musical vocabulary with which to describe their experiences.
103. The pupils' attitude to music is satisfactory and sometimes good. They enjoy music and work hard. They behave well in lessons. Relationships between teachers and the pupils are good and they are able to have fun in their music lessons as well as learn. This was particular evident in the Year 4 lesson based around traditional singing games when the pupils, teacher and support staff were clearly enjoying themselves. The pupils co-operate satisfactorily in their music lessons, for example when they work in groups developing their street calls and this also contributes to their personal development.
104. Teaching was satisfactory in the singing lessons seen in junior classes. The teachers have a adequate subject knowledge, which enables them to support soundly the pupils' learning. They explain the lesson objectives clearly and use them in the session at the end of the lesson to help the pupils gauge their success. All the teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to promote the pupils' self esteem and give them confidence in their work.
105. A good variety of music covering different musical traditions is played in assembly. Although this is making some contribution towards the pupils' cultural development, the opportunity to broaden the pupils' understanding and appreciation of the music is missed.
106. Lessons are well planned and cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Lesson planning is carefully linked to the programmes of study and the co-ordinator monitors the planning effectively to ensure there are no gaps. The curriculum is enriched by extra curricular activities, such as the choir and by links with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. The use of visiting music teachers ensures the gifted and talented pupils are suitably supported and their skills and knowledge are extended. The use of information and communication technology is at a very early stage of development to support the pupils' learning.
107. The subject manager is enthusiastic and offers sound support to colleagues when asked. She has a clear view of what the future needs of the subject are. She does not work alongside colleagues in their music lessons and takes no part in monitoring teaching and learning and consequently does not have a secure knowledge of the standards the pupils attain.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Standards in the three dance lessons observed were average for both seven and 11-year-olds. This is similar to the standards at the last inspection. Progress is satisfactory for both infant and junior pupils. Most 11-year-olds are able to swim 25 metres by the time that they leave the school. There is one hour allocated for physical education, which is less than most schools and limits the opportunities that the pupils have to develop their physical skills. The use of the

village hall, which is adjacent to the school, for some junior activities extends the range of work that can be covered.

109. In the one infant lesson, the Year 2 pupils demonstrated satisfactory levels of co-ordination and spatial awareness. They refined their dance movements and built on the skills they have learnt in previous lessons, for example by changing speed, level and direction when moving around the hall. The pupils used their imagination to respond to the teacher's story. They thought about their movements and experimented with these by moving in different ways. They worked well together in pairs and follow effectively the teacher's clear instructions. They use the opportunities to think about their movements well to improve the quality of their performance.
110. Junior pupils are making good progress in developing the control and quality of performance in dance. In a Year 3 lesson, the pupils discussed the types of movement and then with a partner explore different ways of moving. Each pupil took turns to teach their partner the movements they had developed. The pupils concentrated well and improved their control when moving to the music around the hall. The pupils demonstrated an imaginative response to the music and different ways to move to it. Year 6 pupils performed the final stage of several weeks work in developing a dance drama. Their performances were imaginative, co-ordinated and they worked well in their groups.
111. The quality of teaching is good overall. Where teaching is good there is a high level of physical challenge for pupils and the pace of lessons is maintained, allowing the pupils to respond to lessons with enthusiasm and a sense of enjoyment. Lessons are well planned, providing the pupils with appropriate opportunities for developing a variety of skills, but there are limited opportunities for pupils to evaluate their performance and that of others. The teachers make use of pupils to demonstrate, which reinforces the pupils' understanding of their tasks and related skills. The teachers challenge the pupils to think about their own ideas for ways to move and in this way they improve their performance and the pupils mostly apply themselves well. The teachers provide suitable opportunities for the pupils to demonstrate good levels of co-operation when working in groups and collaborate well when given paired activities.
112. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has only recently taken on the role but has been active in establishing an appropriate and effective action plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and, for seven and 11 year olds, they continue to be in line with those laid down in the locally agreed syllabus. The work the pupils undertake contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a display about 'People who care for us', a Year 3 pupil made a thoughtful and spiritual statement, 'When you are lost God looks after you'.
114. The quality of teaching varies but is predominantly good at both key stages, although there was one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 3. In the best lessons teachers draw and build on the pupils' previous learning. For example, the pupils in Year 2 were studying Hinduism and in a lesson about Diwali, the teacher drew on their own experiences of celebrations, such as birthdays and Christmas, to promote their understanding of this festival. Earlier work showed they had looked at the family life of Hindus and their worship at home. The pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, and, in another good lesson, the teacher of Year 4 pupils asked the pupils to draw their impressions of what an angel looks like. Through a very good question and answer session she drew from the pupils, common features they had used to depict an angel. She shared with the pupils the artists' impressions of angels, sensitively drawing out their feelings about them and developing an understanding that not all angels are seen as being 'good'. The teacher had high expectations of good behaviour and the pupils respected this. However, the teacher of the Year 3 pupils had difficulties in maintaining control in her lesson, and this led to a loss of teaching and learning time, as she had to continually stop the lesson to direct the pupils' attention back to their work. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and present facts well. In a lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher explained very clearly how the

festival of Eid is celebrated. She introduced the pupils to the type of cards Muslims send at this time and the typical greetings on them. Through discussion the pupils picked out common features on the cards and compared them with cards they send at Christmas. Most teachers are skilful at including a wide range of the pupils in discussions and in providing appropriate work for them. This enables all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress.

115. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is very keen and knowledgeable and found a recent training course very useful especially as it gave her a greater insight into other world religions. She has been able to pass this knowledge on to other teachers. She has a clear action plan for developing the subject that includes building up resources to support teaching, especially artefacts for Christianity and other religions. Visits to the local church also enhance learning. She oversees teachers' planning regularly, analyses the pupils' work and has made classroom visits to monitor teaching and the effect it has on the pupils' learning. Simple, but effective systems are in place for assessing the pupils' knowledge.