

INSPECTION REPORT

GREASBY INFANT SCHOOL

Greasby

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 105022

Headteacher: Mrs E Moir

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Canham

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th February 2004

Inspection number: 256250

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	190
School address:	Barker Lane Greasby Wirral
Postcode:	CH49 3NX
Telephone number:	0151 6772830
Fax number:	0151 6410098
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Philip Shepherd
Date of previous inspection:	April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- Greasby Infant is a two-form entry school and is smaller than average for this type of school.
- Numbers on roll have declined over several years because of changes in the characteristics of the local community.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- Greasby Infant School has gained the nationally recognised Achievement Award on three occasions.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is low. No pupil is in the early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average; pupils have physical, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry to the Reception classes is above average, with specific strengths in mathematics, language and personal, social, and emotional development.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1353	Paul Canham	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Science; Personal, social, health and citizenship education; Physical education.
9907	William Orr	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
30243	Anne Heakin	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History; Special educational needs.
22657	Mark Madeley	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communication technology; Mathematics; The Foundation Stage; Religious education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Greasby Infant is a very effective school and it provides very good value for money. Since the last inspection, the school has consistently maintained well above average standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. Pupils have very good attitudes and achieve well in this school with its outstanding ethos. Pupils' personal development is very good, because they receive good teaching and very effective support and guidance. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. With the support of staff and the very good governors, she provides a clear vision and is committed to promoting equality and high levels of achievement. The school works in close partnership with parents, who value the broad and rich curriculum their children receive.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good levels of achievement and standards that are well above the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics, and above expectations in science by the end of Year 2.
- Very effective leadership and management by the headteacher in a school with an outstanding ethos.
- Very good governance.
- Good teaching.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Very good personal and social development.
- Very good support and guidance for pupils, based on careful monitoring.
- Very good promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum.
- Inconsistent use of information and communication technology (ICT) in subjects.

IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection is **good**. The school has maintained well above average standards successfully and addressed the issues for action identified in the previous report. Work is now well matched to the needs of pupils of different attainment. Challenging tasks are provided for higher attaining pupils. A greater emphasis is placed upon using and applying mathematics and on investigative and experimental work in science. The quality of information now provided for parents is very good. Good standards in teaching have been maintained and improved further. The headteacher continues to provide very good leadership and management, supported by very effective governors and a cohesive staff who have excellent relationships with pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			*similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A*	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key: A* - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.

* Schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals.

The national test data shows that, when compared with standards attained in all schools and similar schools, standards gained by pupils in Year 2 were well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The best results were in mathematics, where over 40 per cent of pupils reached levels above those expected nationally. In reading and writing, girls gained substantially higher standards than boys, though the pattern is similar to that found nationally. The school has

recognised the differences in performance and it is reviewing its planning. Standards in science were assessed as also well above the national average for all schools and above average for similar schools. There were no significant differences between the standards gained by the small number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and other pupils.

Evidence from the inspection shows that achievement is good. Attainment on entry is above average and the good start children receive in the Reception classes is developed systematically through the school. Pupils' very good language and literacy skills underpin the good levels of achievement throughout the school. Standards of work seen in Year 2 during the inspection suggest that the majority of pupils are on course to reach levels well above those expected nationally in all aspects of English and mathematics by the end of the school year. In science, standards of work in Year 2 indicate that the majority of pupils are likely to reach levels above those expected nationally. In religious education, pupils' work in Year 2 is likely to reach levels above those required by the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in ICT are on course to meet the national expectations for Year 2. Because of the requirements of the inspection, it was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to judge standards in all curriculum areas, although some good quality work was seen in several subjects, including music, art and design, and design and technology, where pupils showed flair and imagination. No apparent differences in achievement were seen between boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress towards their individual targets.

Pupils' personal development is very good, and spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to their learning. Behaviour in lessons is very good, and pupils enjoy very good relationships with each other. They are extremely confident and develop into very mature individuals by the time they leave school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good. The good teaching is the driving force which enables the pupils to achieve. However, there are marked differences between the lively, imaginative and challenging teaching styles seen in the majority of classes and the mundane teaching seen in some others. Good teaching was seen in all year groups and subjects and assessment is good. It was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to judge teaching in all subjects. The school provides a good curriculum. It has richness in the range of learning opportunities, which include French and a successful focus on the creative and performing arts. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities, which have been thoughtfully developed to help raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The provision for special educational needs is also good; individual education plans (IEPs) include clear guidance on how to meet pupils' needs. The quality of care is very good and the school is highly valued by parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The governors are very effective, successfully fulfilling their statutory duties. The headteacher has high aspirations and makes effective use of self-evaluation. With the support of a very good senior management team and governing body, she has developed a school with an outstanding ethos. As a consequence, it has maintained very good standards in key subjects.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school. They feel they are well informed and are very comfortable about approaching the school with concerns or suggestions. Discussions with pupils confirm that they are very happy at school. They feel safe and well cared for, enjoy their lessons and like their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Implement a consistent approach to the use of ICT in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good. The standards of work seen in English and mathematics are likely to reach levels well above those expected nationally. Standards in science are on course to reach levels above those expected nationally. Standards in religious education are likely to reach beyond the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Good quality work was seen in several other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good standards of work seen during the inspection.
- Very good attainment in Year 2.
- Good achievement for all pupils, including those with SEN.
- Very good language and literacy skills used to support work in all subjects.
- Very good personal and social development.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.1 (16.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.9 (18.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 54 pupils in the year group.

1. Information from national assessment data shows that, when compared with all schools and similar schools, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards in 2003 that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards assessed in science were also well above the national average for all schools and above average for similar schools. The school has maintained very good standards over several years. The girls outperformed boys in all three subjects, though the pattern is similar to that found nationally. There were no significant differences between the standards gained by pupils from the small number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

2. When children enter the Reception classes their attainment is above average overall, with specific strengths in mathematics, language, and personal, social, and emotional development. Children's achievement is good and almost all children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year; a significant proportion are likely to exceed them.

3. Pupils' use of well-developed language and literacy skills across the curriculum is a key factor in much of the work seen during the inspection. Pupils are confident speakers and listen well to their teachers and one another. Standards of work seen in Year 2 during the inspection suggest that in English and mathematics the majority of pupils are on course to reach levels well above those expected nationally by the end of the year. Most pupils are confident readers and achieve well in response to good teaching. Pupils write with flair and imagination. Reading skills are used to research information and pupils are expected to record their scientific investigations, using their own words. The use of role-play encourages pupils to use their speaking and listening skills, a particular strength in the majority of lessons. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects and they do so confidently. Higher attaining pupils are confident and working at a high level in mathematics. In science, standards of work in Year 2 indicate that the majority of pupils are likely to reach beyond the nationally expected level through effective teaching and enrichment in pupils' learning.

4. In religious education, pupils' work in Year 2 is likely to meet standards above the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in ICT are on course to meet the national expectations, though skills are not used systematically to support work in all subjects.
5. Owing to the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to gather enough evidence to judge standards in all subjects, although some good quality work was seen in history and geography, where pupils demonstrated good subject knowledge. The high quality of displays also reflects the richness of the curriculum, which allows pupils to become creative, imaginative and to develop their performance skills. No apparent differences in achievement were seen between boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs and those deemed to be gifted or talented achieve well. The school analyses data effectively, sets targets and has very good assessment procedures, so that teachers become aware quickly of any additional learning needs. Where appropriate, the school involves other professionals to make sure pupils' individual needs are met.
7. The good achievement results from several factors: the richness of the curriculum, the good quality teaching, the strength of subject leadership and effective use of assessment data to ensure that challenging work is provided for all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good behaviour and attitudes.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- The very good relationships between pupils.
- The respect for feelings, values and beliefs of others.

Commentary

8. This area of the school's work has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. The challenging and varied activities that the school provides develop in them a love of learning. In lessons, pupils show a very positive 'can do' attitude and a zest for learning. Pupils in Year 2 interviewed during the inspection reported that they work hard and their lessons are fun. For example, in Year 2, the whole class was highly motivated and engrossed during a practical investigation into the properties of materials in science. Similarly, in response to the teacher's dynamic approach, pupils in Year 1 were very keen to show the teacher the skills they had developed during gymnastics. Singing in lessons is spirited, joyous and tuneful. Pupils in Year 1 continued to sing in French in the corridor after a language lesson. After-school clubs, which include activities to promote confidence and self-esteem, are well supported by pupils.

9. The outstanding school ethos successfully emphasises the importance of raising pupils' self-esteem. In lessons, teachers value the contribution that individuals make. Pupils feel very secure in the school and this helps them to grow in confidence. Pupils cheerfully and diligently carry out assigned duties, such as returning attendance registers to the school office or opening corridor doors at break times. They take an obvious pride in their work and their appearance. Pupils with special educational needs respond very well to their lessons. They demonstrate a very positive attitude to their learning and enjoy working alongside their classmates. The additional adult support helps pupils to come to terms with their difficulties and to build very trusting relationships with adults and their classmates. Pupils are very well behaved. Throughout the school, all pupils display high

levels of self-discipline. They play boisterously, but with concern for each other, in the school playground. They are well mannered and show consideration for others by, for example, offering assistance without being asked to do so. There is no evidence of bullying or any other form of harassment.

10. The school cultivates pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Children in the Reception classes are supported effectively in their personal, social and emotional development and all but a few will reach the expected learning goals. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and show awareness of their roles in society and the wider world. This provision is threaded through many lessons and other aspects of school life. Pupils raise money for a number of charities, such as 'shoebox' appeals or a trust for education in Africa. They display maturity in their questions and comments, both in lessons and elsewhere. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 listened carefully and talked confidently to other pupils and adults. During circle time, pupils in Year 2 discussed racial harassment with considerable sensitivity and concern.

11. Religious education lessons are reflective and meaningful. Prayers arise naturally at assemblies in line with the theme for the day. In a personal, health and social education lesson, pupils in Year 2 reflected on 'God's quiet things' and other world religions were discussed in a thoughtful way. Library books and references to Christianity and other major world faiths are prominently displayed. Pupils are developing a good understanding of Western culture through literature, art, and geography and by learning French in Year 1. The school is also making great strides to develop pupils' awareness of other cultures through classroom displays and curriculum enrichment activities. For example, during the inspection, pupils attended an off-site centre to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White –any other White background
Asian or Asian British-Indian
Asian or Asian British
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
182	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good. The good curriculum is enriched by a wide range of after-school clubs and activities. The overall quality of care is very good and the school has very effective links with parents and good links with the community. The quality of education is better than that reported in the previous inspection.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lively and stimulating teaching.
- Planning that focuses closely on the needs of individuals.
- The effective use of imaginative strategies that fully engage pupils.
- Effective questioning skills based on good assessment procedures.
- Satisfactory teaching that lacked both flair and an effective range of teaching methods.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	15	6	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons (no percentages given because fewer than 30 lessons were observed).

12. Teaching is good. It is an important strength of the school and is the driving force that enables pupils to achieve well. Nearly a quarter of lessons observed were judged to be very good and all these were seen in Year 2. However, there are inconsistencies and there is a striking contrast between the lively, imaginative and challenging teaching styles seen in the majority of classes and the small proportion of lessons that, whilst being satisfactory, lacked the flair, sparkle and good range of teaching methods. Good teaching was seen in all year groups and in all subjects that provided a focus for the inspection. However, not enough evidence could be gathered to judge teaching in all subjects. The school recognises the need to share the most effective teaching practice that already exists.

13. Teachers plan well together, ensuring consistency and a systematic approach to learning. These characteristics featured in the good and very good teaching seen throughout the school, where expectations are high. For example, in a good lesson, pupils in year 2 made good progress in recognising and making whole and half turns in mathematics, as a result of stimulating teaching and the imaginative use of resources.

14. In the very effective teaching seen during the inspection, pupils were engrossed in their work and made very good progress. Pupils were captivated by the inspiring and highly effective range of stimulating teaching strategies. For example, pupils in Year 2 made very good gains in their understanding of the characters within a story through the teacher's use of role-play, which stirred their imaginations. Pupils gained an insight and developed a good understanding of the differences between what characters look like and how they are perceived. The rapid pace and imaginative teaching methods encouraged an outstandingly successful range of spoken responses from pupils.

15. In Year 2, pupils were enthralled by the experience of playing a full and active part in celebrating the Chinese New Year, dressing in Chinese costume, having a lesson in the use of Chinese script and practising Tai Chi. The tasks and activities were sensitively matched to the pupils' stages of learning, including those with special educational needs and those deemed to be gifted and talented. As a consequence, pupils made very good progress in their understanding of Chinese culture.

16. Teachers make effective use of day-to-day assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. A particular feature of the good and very good teaching was very effective and skilful questioning, taking careful account of how different individuals learn and repeating concepts that have not been fully understood. Teachers are fully aware of individual pupils' learning needs, including those with special educational needs. Support staff prompt and make sure pupils fully understand their tasks, so that they gain full benefit from their lessons. Where pupils are withdrawn for individual or small group activities, the teaching is of good quality and closely structured to meet pupil's individual learning needs. They are skilled at promoting equality of opportunity. Teachers value the contribution of all pupils and direct their questions to as many as possible during lessons. Pupils' personal development underpins much of the teaching and lessons usually stimulate additional thinking and reasoning. Activities are planned at different levels to make it possible for all pupils to achieve well. Marking shows that teachers often give good guidance for pupils to improve. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work in pairs and groups and also to work independently.

17. Assessment procedures are good overall and very good in English. In English, mathematics and science, teachers have assembled some detailed diagnostic evidence to show the level at which each pupil is currently working and the extent of his or her progress over time. At present, this assessment information is largely confined to these three subjects, though the school is developing procedures for other subjects with the help of national guidelines.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school offers a good range of enrichment activities. The school's accommodation and staffing are good and resources for learning are adequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A broad and rich curriculum, which includes French.
- A good range of out-of-school activities.
- Very good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Lack of a systematic approach to planning for ICT across the curriculum.
- Very experienced teaching staff.
- Plentiful accommodation, which is well adapted to the needs of the disabled.

Commentary

18. The school has successfully developed an interesting range of learning opportunities which places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, as well the development of pupils' creative, aesthetic, practical and performing skills. The innovative curriculum provides links between subjects that are being explored well and opportunities are particularly well developed for pupils to use their literacy skills. The school's strong emphasis on personal development underpins much of its work. The school recognises the need to increase the use of ICT across the curriculum and to develop a range of enrichment projects to improve learning opportunities further.

19. The school meets the statutory requirement to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It also timetables an act of collective worship daily for all classes. Effective yearly subject planning covers an extensive range of topics in all subjects and makes good use of the national guidelines. The programme for children in the Reception classes is well planned. It follows the national guidelines and challenges children by incorporating expectations from the National Curriculum, especially in personal development, English and mathematics. The school extends the curriculum for Years 1 and 2 by teaching a very good programme of personal, social and health education, which incorporates sex education and guidance on substance abuse. In addition, French is taught to pupils in Year 1, and pupils benefit from additional lessons of reading and handwriting. These initiatives are helping the school to raise standards further.

20. Pupils have access to all the opportunities offered by the school. The school provides well for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils who are gifted or talented. Teachers set individual targets, which are well focused and regularly and consistently monitored, and there is a genuine emphasis on involving all pupils in the lessons. The progress made by pupils with individual educational plans is reviewed regularly and new targets set. The regular evaluations completed by the school allow teachers to identify groups of pupils who will benefit from additional attention. For example, a small group of pupils are withdrawn for a social skills session and other pupils receive individual help with their literacy skills.

21. There is a club or activity on most nights after school and attendance is good from all age groups. Pupils enjoy the drama-type activities of the 'Life Skills' classes and they improve games skills at the soccer and tennis clubs. The 'Story Sack' session is of a high quality. It encourages parents and their children to share toys whilst playing the parts of the characters featured in the story. The school makes very good use of the skills of an artist, an author, theatre groups and musicians to further enhance pupils' experience of the arts. Pupils are taken on a good range of educational visits, such as to local churches, country parks, and Chinese New Year celebrations.

22. There is an effective team of experienced staff who are well qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum and develop it further. In addition, the school engages two part-time subject specialists.

23. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum overall. There are strengths in the Reception classes, where equipment is sensibly shared between the two classes and used well, and in information and communications technology, where the school has ample computers in the suite and in classrooms for pupils to practise their skills regularly.

24. The school has made effective use of the accommodation, developing a suite of rooms for the Reception classes, a computer suite, and a music and resources room for working in small groups. However, the library is too small and poorly placed for use in a class lesson. The building is adapted well for disabled access with ramps, sound systems and colour-coded mats for pupils and adults with impaired vision. A strong feature of the accommodation is the good quality of the displays, which are attractive, informative and often interactive. They add to the welcoming and stimulating environment and reflect the richness of pupils' learning. Good use is made of the extensive fields, two playgrounds and adventure area outside.

25. This aspect of the school's work has improved well since the previous inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very effective. The very caring environment has a very positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. The school provides good support, advice and guidance for pupils and consistently monitors their achievements and personal development. Pupils are fully involved in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very caring and safe learning environment.
- The very good guidance and monitoring procedures.
- Outstanding trusting relationships between pupils and staff.

Commentary

26. Provision for health and safety is very good. The comprehensive health and safety policies are implemented effectively throughout the school and records rigorously maintained. Pupils are well supervised, at lunch times and break times, by staff who know them well. Visitors such as

police, nurses, road safety officers, drugs advisors and fire service personnel, together with a parent who is a nurse, provide a wide range of personal health and safety guidance. Child protection procedures are good and they comply with local guidelines and national requirements.

27. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development is very good. They receive very good individual care and support from the headteacher, class teachers and teaching assistants. The school ensures that the provision outlined in the statements of special educational need is implemented and, where necessary, liaises with external professionals, such as educational psychologists, learning support service, occupational therapists and the health authorities. Good quality records are maintained and the very good relationships and regular discussions between staff mean that class teachers are fully aware of the individual needs of their pupils.

28. Teachers know the pupils very well. The smooth running of the school and its outstanding ethos are built upon the excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils indicated that they felt much valued by adults and that they would be happy to approach any member of staff with their concerns. Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is good. Teachers assess pupils' academic needs well during lessons. They have good questioning skills, and vary questions to ensure that all pupils are engaged in, and challenged by, the set tasks. This was clearly seen in several very good lessons, including English, when groups of pupils were asked searching questions about their understanding of adjectives and how they can be used in sentences. Annual reports to parents provide details of their children's academic achievements and targets for improvement. These also indicate the pupils' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and any other achievements in school. Each fortnight the headteacher invites six pupils to a tea party in her office. She uses the opportunity to celebrate the pupils' best work, make pastoral enquiries and to sample and monitor overall standards and pupils' progress. Pupils are encouraged to voice their views at circle time and in lessons; the recently formed school council provides a formal forum for pupils to express their opinions on wider issues.

29. Good behaviour is encouraged through a system of rewards and pupils' academic and social achievements are celebrated at weekly school assemblies. Gentle, but progressive, sanctions are very effective and only rarely are pupils required to see the headteacher.

30. This aspect of the school's work has improved since the previous inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and good links with the local community. It has developed good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good information for parents.
- The priority given to the involvement of parents.
- Close links with parents.

Commentary

31. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Communications such as the prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents, newsletters and pupils' reports are informative and 'user friendly'. Parents receive a leaflet at the beginning of each term detailing what the children are covering in lessons. They have numerous opportunities to speak to teachers, or the headteacher, on occasions such as induction visits, curriculum events or parents' evenings. The school has an 'open door' policy and seeks and values parents' views and support.

32. Parents' views were very positive at the pre-inspection meeting, in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, on pupils' school reports and in 'thank you' letters and cards to the headteacher. A parent governor helps with pupils in lessons and other parents co-ordinate a

Walking Bus of parents and pupils to school three days a week. Many parents and friends provide valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals. Wherever possible, parents' skills and interests are used to broaden the curriculum. The school fully involves the parents of pupils who have special educational needs. Parents are invited to annual reviews and kept informed on an ongoing basis.

33. The Friends of Greasby Infant School organises regular social and fundraising events. These events are well supported and the school benefits significantly from substantial donations, which have helped to improve playground facilities. Recent events include a 'grandparents' concert. There are effective links with other local primary schools, including the adjacent junior school and the independent pre-school playgroup. Local residents are consulted over initiatives, such as the school travel plan. Other valued contacts include Greasby library, visiting ministers, a youth worker and adults with special needs. There is also voluntary help from the community through initiatives such as reading partnerships.

34. This aspect of the school's work has improved since the previous inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the development of the school. The school evaluates its work very well and there are very good systems for financial management. The governors are very effective, successfully fulfilling their statutory duties.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Vision and high aspirations of the headteacher.
- Very good management.
- The effectiveness of the governors' support in shaping the vision and direction of the school.
- The school's self-evaluation and its use.
- Commitment to inclusion.
- Very good financial management.

35. Since the last inspection, when leadership and management were judged to be good, a senior management team has been established and school self-evaluation introduced. These developments, combined with the support of an experienced and knowledgeable governing body, have resulted in the development of very effective leadership and management that are having a clear impact on pupil's achievement and standards. The school has successfully maintained high standards in reading and well above average standards in writing and mathematics over several years. The headteacher has built a strong and cohesive staff team, all of whom have a commitment to high standards and to providing a rich range of experiences for pupils. The school's outstanding ethos features in all aspects of its work. Pupils benefit significantly from a very positive climate for learning, very good relationships and the school's high aspirations.

36. The deputy head and senior teacher have clearly defined responsibilities and are developing their roles well. Working closely with the headteacher, the deputy is responsible for staff development, the curriculum and school self-evaluation - all strong aspects of the school's work. The senior teacher is responsible for assessment procedures, the development of information and communication technology and is currently focusing on different learning styles and how these can be used to improve teaching. The work of the school continues to evolve through review, well considered initiatives and with support from outside agencies.

37. English and science benefit from very good leadership and management. Several other curriculum areas are also well led, and these include mathematics, information and communication technology, the Reception classes and special educational needs. Subject leaders monitor the developments in their own subjects in line with the school's self-evaluation programme. The school has placed an initial emphasis on English, mathematics, and science. The leaders of these subjects, who are members of the senior management team, gain information by team teaching and reviewing pupils' books each half-term. Leaders in other subjects will follow this model when their own curriculum areas come up for review. All subject leaders have a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects, but there is scope for further development of their roles in monitoring teaching and learning. The provision for special educational needs is managed effectively by a part-time co-ordinator. Procedures are fully in line with the Code of Practice and requirements relating to annual reviews are met. The small number of pupils with special educational needs benefit significantly from the support of staff who are deployed effectively and focus on individual learning needs.

38. The school places a strong emphasis on school self-evaluation and all staff strive consistently to attain high standards in all areas of the school's work. The school analyses carefully any data available, identifying trends in pupils' performance, asking probing questions, and devising strategies for further improvement. The performance management targets for teachers are closely linked with identified areas for school development and form a cohesive cycle of review and

improvement. The well above average standards maintained by the school are due in no small measure to this strong focus on improvement. The school benefits from a stable and experienced staff, but makes a very good contribution to teacher training by regularly welcoming students to work within the school.

39. The governing body is experienced and effective in all aspects of its work. All statutory duties, including promoting inclusive policies in relation to race and disability, are fully met. Governors are very well informed and are fully committed to the vision of a happy and solid foundation to pupils' learning and the development of all pupils as individuals. They visit regularly and have a good picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. When governors have observed lessons, they keep each other informed by reporting back to the full governing body. Within the spirit of fully empathising with pupils, the governor responsible for mathematics insists that members of the governing body take the national tests. Governors are able to contribute very effectively to the school improvement plan, which focuses well on raising standards further and on providing high quality learning experiences for pupils.

40. The school's approach to financial and resource management is very effective in helping the school achieve its educational priorities. The school makes very good use of resources to fulfil its educational aims. The potential impact on pupils is at the centre of all financial decisions and the school seeks best value for money in its spending. The school consults widely and considers its performance against that of similar schools. Best value principles are well established. The governors monitor the effectiveness of spending decisions. The costs are below average and the school provides very good value for money in its effective work.

Financial information for the year 2002 to 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	383,058.00
Total expenditure	389,990.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,010.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	10,782.00
Balance carried forward to the next year	-6,932.00*

** with agreement of the LEA*

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good**.

41. All children can start school full-time in September, though some parents of summer born-children decline this offer and their children start full-time in January. Children enter the Reception classes with above average attainment overall and with specific strengths in mathematics, language, and personal, social, and emotional development. Children's achievement is good because the teachers quickly establish routines and make early assessments. Almost all children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year and a significant proportion are likely to exceed them. There are no children yet identified as having special educational needs.

42. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and uses this knowledge to plan the programme for the children. She has supported colleagues through discussion and shared planning and by monitoring children's work, though she has yet to work alongside her colleagues to support their practice and children's learning. The curriculum is well planned and linked to the national guidance. It successfully incorporates elements from the National Curriculum, so that higher attaining children are sufficiently challenged. On a weekly basis it is effectively planned around a theme to make full use of the three rooms available to the children, though use of the outdoor learning area is not yet fully integrated into the programme. The children have a daily act of collective worship and these are of good quality. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on the provision of knowledge and understanding, nor physical and creative development, though the other learning areas are reported in full.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good promotion of moral, social and spiritual development.
- The priority given to independent learning.
- Very good individual care and support.
- Good teaching.

Commentary

43. Most children arrive at school with some experience of organised pre-school but they come from a very wide range of providers. Induction procedures help children settle quickly. Children are very well behaved, keen to attend, and settle quickly into the Reception classes. Children are very motivated to learn, because teachers and other adults give them small responsibilities and trust them. For example, children worked cooperatively when sharing the computer and when using the beanbag while playing hopscotch. Children regularly listen to well-chosen stories that promote moral and social values. They sing tunefully and say prayers at the end of the day, promoting spiritual development. Teaching is good because planning ensures that children are given good opportunities to develop their personal skills. For example, children are encouraged to put on their coats by themselves and they are given some measure of choice during the day. During the

inspection, nearly all the children elected to use the writing table and sustained concentration at this activity for more than 30 minutes. Relationships are based on mutual respect and all adults assess learning by asking children about their work. Adults also make regular observations of the children at play and record their observations in individual profiles.

COMMUNICATIONS, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for the development of communications, language and literacy skills is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective promotion of reading skills.
- Imaginative use of reading books.
- Good teaching.

Commentary

44. Children are articulate, confident speakers, often using full sentences to express their views. They ask sensible questions and higher attainers give detailed explanations about their work, using good vocabulary. They listen carefully and politely when others are talking. Children respond well to the range of teaching methods which are used to encourage them to listen. For example, role-play is used to help children repeat well-known lines from stories, such as 'Who's been eating my porridge?' Children learn the letter sounds through weekly focused activities, which include stories such as 'We're going on a bear hunt'. Role play is used particularly well to reinforce the main details of the stories. The routine of sharing a book with an adult at home is well established and very well supported. At 'home time' most children easily recognise their own book bag by their name. Higher attaining children are reading simple books, using their memory and the words they have learned. Average and lower attaining children recognise individual words and use the pictures to help tell the story.

45. Children believe that they are writers and are keen to show everyone how good they are. This very positive attitude has been promoted through good teaching, which is supportive and closely focused on each child's stage of learning. Children have frequent opportunities to practise writing their names and most write them fluently. Letters are mostly formed correctly and children are frequently encouraged to write alongside their pictures or write complete sentences about their experiences.

46. Children benefit from good teaching, which uses information from effective assessment procedures. Careful planning challenges all children, including the higher attainers who are working on tasks within the National Curriculum. Tasks are well explained and organised, and well-established routines lead to children being well behaved and highly motivated.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for pupils' mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work that is closely matched to individual needs.
- A good range of mathematical activities.
- Good teaching.

Commentary

47. Children achieve well in response to the good teaching. Teachers build successfully on children's experiences, providing meaningful play activities, combined with worksheets for higher attaining children. The pace of learning is good and many children quickly reach the national standard for their age and move onto tasks set within the National Curriculum. During the inspection, children showed that they have a good understanding of number, counting to 100 with confidence, while the teacher used the number square as a prompt. Higher attaining children recognised that there were errors in the order of the numbers and gleefully pointed them out to the class. Many children understand how to add 'one more than' because the teachers' marking leads them towards this by adding another shape to their diagrams.

48. Teaching is good because it reinforces children's good mathematical language, and they use it to talk confidently about their work. Teachers and other adults insist upon the correct use of mathematical terms. For example, children used appropriate terms to describe the position of the teddy in a computer program. They know the names of the flat shapes because they have made faces with them and some have labelled their pictures. Children consolidate their learning of number using a good range of resources, such as playing a counting game or hop scotch outside.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

49. Children begin to understand about time and light and dark through lively activities which capture their interest. During the inspection, children used the computer confidently, opening programs and selecting items accurately with the mouse.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

50. During the inspection, children played enthusiastically outside under close supervision. Small tools and writing implements were handled well because there are many opportunities to perfect these skills. Children are given many opportunities to write and draw regularly, making full use of the facilities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

51. Children develop their skills and understanding through a good range of practical activities, both inside and outside, based around the weekly theme. During the inspection, children were seen making good quality 'bear faces' in play dough, using a range of techniques. Additional small rooms are used well by children for role-play areas; at the moment they are a 'clinic' and 'the three bears' house'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **very good**.

- Very good leadership and management.
- Very effective assessment procedures.
- Very good development of pupils speaking and listening skills.
- The inadequacy of the library.
- Very effective promotion of literacy across the curriculum.

Commentary

52. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those deemed to be gifted and talented, achieve well in all aspects of English and standards are likely to reach levels that are well above national expectations by the end of Year 2. The good level of achievement is due in no small measure to teachers' high expectations and pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Information from national tests and assessments indicates that the school has maintained high standards over several years when compared with similar schools.

53. Speaking and listening skills are very well developed. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to practise and they become confident when they speak to visitors, happily saying 'Bonjour' as they pass people in the corridor. In sessions where pupils shared their news, the teacher successfully encouraged pupils in Year 2 to ask 'polished' questions that required more than a simple 'yes' or 'no' response. In other lessons, pupils worked collaboratively. For example, they discussed the correct labelling for the diagram of a church, enthused about the range of activities during their 'Chinese New Year' celebration, classified toys according to age, and worked in groups to suggest questions to be posed to a character in their storybook. Teachers model language well, encouraging pupils to emulate what they hear. In discussion with pupils, it is evident that, despite being so young, they have learned to listen as well as talk. The very good relationships within the school are apparent as pupils take turns and respond well to each other.

54. Reading skills are very well developed. Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about their favourite stories. They are encouraged to read at home and it is evident from the home-school reading records that parents support their children well. Teachers appreciate the comments made by parents and this joint approach is successful in maintaining the high standards of reading in the school. Parents also run the story sack loan system, providing books and toys for parents to use when playing with their children and encouraging a love of literature. Teachers plan additional reading sessions for the older pupils. As a result, pupils develop more sophisticated reading skills as they work individually or in small groups to retrieve factual information, using the text as inspiration, for example, to write a letter of condolence or make up a wizard's spell. Teachers are meticulous in recording pupils' reading progress and moving them to the next stage in their learning, sometimes with extra support; this results in all pupils achieving well. By the age of seven, pupils know how to use contents, index and glossary pages, but the library accommodation is limited and is a barrier to the further development of independent retrieval skills.

55. Pupils' writing is very well developed throughout the curriculum. One reason for this is the way teachers make sure that pupils write in lessons other than English. For example, pupils are encouraged to record using their own words in science and when writing instructions for puppet making in design technology. In history, pupils wrote a diary account of the Great Fire of London. As pupils learn to read and write about a wider range of topics, their cultural awareness develops. Pupils take care with the presentation of their work and the seven-year-olds are starting to use cursive writing in their books. Teachers' marking is helpful, recognising what pupils have achieved and showing the next stage in the learning. The school has developed a particularly effective method of assessing pupils' written work and retaining the samples in individual books. The

assessments are detailed and informative, and the books are valuable in showing each pupil's progress in writing while attending the school. As a result of the good assessment information each pupil has writing targets. Pupils benefit significantly from the combination of teachers' accurate assessments, very effective planning, and motivating targets.

56. Teaching is good overall, but it is inconsistent, with a range from very good to satisfactory. Lessons are productive. The school's ethos is intrinsic in the teaching methods used throughout the school; teachers make sure that all pupils achieve well and individuals are given close support. Teachers question pupils well, making very good use of assessment information. Teachers encourage pupils to extend their vocabulary by thinking of different words and older pupils make good use of a thesaurus to help them. A particular strength of the very good teaching is the constant self-evaluation pupils make of their own learning. Encouraged by their teacher, they decide if they have achieved the lesson targets. This regular cycle of self-review is motivating; pupils realise how much they have learned and are keen to achieve more, approaching their next challenge with enthusiasm. Pupils know their teachers expect them to do their best and they respond very well, enjoying the pace of the lessons and the tasks they are required to do. Teachers spend considerable time making their classrooms interesting and vibrant, reflecting the topics being taught. Key vocabulary words and advice about sentence construction and punctuation are on display and used well by teachers and pupils as prompts to improve written work.

57. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The two subject leaders are well informed and enthusiastic. A particular strength is the fact that, despite the continued high standards, the school still seeks to improve standards further. Information from regular review cycles is analysed and strategies developed. For example: a new system of recording pupils' progress in reading has been introduced; reading activity sessions have been promoted; individual writing assessment books have been established, and a Reading Recovery and Reading Partnership has been introduced. These initiatives, which have been developed following a careful analysis of pupils' work, reflect the school's commitment to raising standards. They are proving to be successful in ensuring that all pupils achieve well in reading and writing. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils are confident speakers and listen well to their teachers and one another. In all subjects teachers refer to skills learned in the English lessons. Correct spelling and use of dictionaries are reinforced. Reading skills are used to research information and pupils are expected to record their scientific investigations using their own words. This approach to promoting literacy has paid dividends because standards continue to be high and pupils achieve well.

MATHEMATICS

The quality of provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management.
- Lively mental sessions which challenge pupils.
- Effective teaching to groups of pupils with similar attainment.
- Insufficient use of ICT to help pupils learn.

Commentary

59. Achievement is good and pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach standards well above those expected nationally by the end of the year. Higher attaining pupils are confident and working at a high level. This picture reflects the standards reached by pupils in the most recent national tests.

Information from national assessments indicates that the school has maintained well above average standards over several years when compared with similar schools. Evidence from the inspection shows that there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

60. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit significantly from a good pace to learning, which is due largely to work that is well-planned and challenging. Pupils, including the higher attainers, are stretched by the range of tasks. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers know their capabilities and ensure that tasks are well matched to their stage of learning. Learning support assistants work sensitively with these pupils, encouraging them and helping them to succeed.

61. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils are keen to learn because teaching is often lively, interesting and challenging. As a consequence, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. Pupils enjoy mental mathematics because the tasks keep them alert and provide challenge. These sessions cover several aspects, including shape and space and number problems. Pupils also benefit significantly from the school's focus on using and applying mathematics' skills. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were keen to understand rotation and how the movement can be measured. Most teachers use a variety of teaching methods, which involves pupils working in groups and pairs. Resources are used well. For example, careful planning ensured that pupils in Year 2 had access to the programmable toy and gained a good understanding of full and half turns by the end of the lesson.

62. A particular strength of good teaching is the highly effective use of assessment procedures which help teachers probe pupils' understanding and set slightly different tasks for pupils within the same attainment group. A weakness in teaching that was otherwise satisfactory was the lack of challenge for pupils who finished tasks earlier than expected.

63. Leadership and management are good. The joint co-ordinators have helped improve standards by evaluating test scores and improving provision. Through monitoring, support and advice they have developed colleagues' subject knowledge and confidence. The annual subject report contains very detailed analysis of test data, identifying patterns of achievement and making recommendations. The school regularly monitors the progress of individual pupils. Information from these good assessment procedures helps teachers place pupils in groups of similar attainment and identify those who would benefit most from additional mathematics programmes. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved and a greater emphasis is now placed on pupils applying their mathematical skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects and they do so confidently. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 1 measured the circumference of their head and other body parts accurately. Pupils in Year 2 compared and contrasted the use of Venn and Carroll diagrams to present information on materials in a science project. Pupils in Year 2 also created graphs from data connected with a project on holidays during geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective leadership and management.
- Good teaching.

Commentary

65. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school, because teaching is effective overall and the curriculum gives them good learning opportunities in practical work and investigations. Pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach standards above those expected nationally by the end of the year. This picture reflects the standards reached by pupils in the national assessments in 2003, though pupils' current work indicates a significant improvement in their understanding of materials and their properties. During the inspection, no differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls and current standards are better than those reported in the previous inspection.

66. Strengths in science include pupils' very good literacy skills, which are used very effectively to record work and their outstanding skills in speaking and listening. These qualities underpin pupils' very good attitudes and mature approach when working independently of the teacher. In Year 2, middle and higher attaining pupils used a good range of vocabulary in their oral explanations and showed a good understanding of the process, including the importance of fair testing, used during practical investigations. Pupils were able to predict with confidence and explain the findings of investigations which focused on the insulating properties of materials and the reasons why ice melts. Expectations were high and the teaching frequently challenged pupils to draw upon their knowledge and understanding. Information and communication technology (ICT) was used well to help pupils measure accurately. Pupils' good levels of understanding were reflected in their written work. Lower attaining pupils and those with SEN, showed confidence when giving reasons for ice melting and achieved as well as others in the class. They were well supported in their work by the class teacher, and other adults, who showed sensitivity and very good knowledge of the pupils' stages of learning.

67. Pupils respond well to their teachers and show great interest in the subject. Teachers make good use of scientific language and insist on the correct use of scientific terminology. Teaching is good overall, but it is inconsistent, with a range from very good to satisfactory. In good and very good lessons seen during the inspection, pupils benefited significantly from teaching that was engaging, well paced and included highly focused questions which were based upon the teachers' very good knowledge of pupils. As a consequence, pupils were engrossed in their work, achieved well, and made good gains in their understanding of materials through investigative science. Pupils were able to relate science in the classroom to their everyday lives. Very effective use was made of additional support to help with the lower attainers. In contrast to these learning experiences, the satisfactory lesson seen was less engaging and slowly paced. It also showed a lack confidence by the teacher when carrying out practical investigations.

68. Science is very effectively led and managed by the headteacher, who is currently overseeing the subject. The subject is under full review and the school is successfully addressing the weaknesses highlighted in the most recent test data, which showed discrepancies in the school's assessment procedures. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning, and new assessment procedures have been introduced. Marking is generally good. Pupils are given a clear picture of what they are doing well and how they can improve their work further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership.
- Effective use of the computer suite.
- Inconsistency in the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

69. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards in Year 2 are on course to reach the level of national expectation. Pupils handle computers with ease, opening programs and selecting the correct icons. Pupils are familiar with the technical vocabulary and talk confidently about 'logging on' and 'deleting'. During the inspection, pupils showed good skills when using a painting program.

70. The depth of pupils' knowledge and understanding reflects the confidence of teachers and their subject knowledge. For example, some pupils in Year 1 have a good knowledge of fonts and the size of letters, while others confidently use four or five different tools in the paint program to create the effect they want.

71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour, with very good attitudes and a mature approach to learning in the computer suite. Lessons seen during the inspection included thorough explanations, often illustrated with the help of the interactive white board. For example, pupils in Year 2 achieved well and correctly deleted e-mails after the teacher showed the whole class how to do so. In Year 1, pupils benefited from clear explanations and time to experiment with the features of a painting program before focusing on the task. Pupils were given good opportunities to use lines, spray cans and 'colour-fill' to complete their pictures. Information from assessments is used to help teachers pose questions and give additional support.

72. The co-ordinator provides knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership. He has been fully involved in developing the facilities and purchasing the software. Recent initiatives include the preparation of subject reviews and the introduction of pupils' portfolios, which will enable the school to match work with national standards. Management of the subject is satisfactory, though the co-ordinator has yet to monitor teaching and learning systematically. Teachers' planning often covers a two-week period and does not contain sufficient detail concerning pupils' next stages of learning. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Information and communications technology across the curriculum

73. The use of pupils' ICT skills is satisfactory and some classes make good use of skills to support learning in other subject areas. For example, imaginative examples were seen in geography, where pupils made effective use of the Internet to research a Scottish island while studying the 'Katie Morag' books. This initiative was coupled with the sending of an 'E-mail' to 'Katie', with pupils developing their skills and understanding of different technology. In mathematics, pupils made effective use of a program which helped pupils present data, related to holidays, in the form of graphs. Pupils in Year 2 also used a commercial programme and their ICT skills to find out about the Chinese New Year. However, the use of ICT is not yet a regular feature of lessons in all subjects. For example, ICT is not used systematically in science to record information or help analyse data from practical investigations.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on the provision made in geography and history, but religious education has a full report. Teachers' planning was analysed. Pupils in Year 2 discussed their work with inspectors. Evidence indicates that **history** and **geography** are used effectively, not just to teach the topics, but also to extend pupils' literacy skills. History and geography contribute well to pupils' social and cultural awareness.

Commentary

74. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed provision for these subjects. Key developments include the introduction of Internet access to enable pupils to research their topics and the introduction of leaflets that include information about the curriculum. Parents value these because the information helps them to support their children's learning at home. Pupils enjoy **history** and **geography**. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 talked enthusiastically, showing a good understanding of time past, appreciating that when Florence Nightingale became a nurse it was most unusual, but now women can choose a career. The current project, based on *Katie Morag* and *The Isle of Col*, has also stimulated pupils' imagination. Pupils in Year 2 described confidently the physical features of the island and were aware that it was not like Greasby. In classrooms, teachers arrange artefacts such as old toys, writing implements and maps, to improve pupils' understanding. Pupils benefit from the imaginative use of resources. For example, history was brought to life in one classroom through the creation of a house as it might have appeared at the time of the Great Fire of London, complete with 'flames' and King Charles' orders on how to prevent the fire spreading.

Religious education

The quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching.
- Effective promotion of pupils' literacy skills.
- The lack of resources to support teaching of different faiths.

Commentary

75. Pupils achieve well in response to good teaching which challenges them to think about the world around them and their place in it. Pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach levels above those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. The good level of work seen during the inspection is enhanced by the pupils' ability to discuss facts and feelings, while using a good range of vocabulary of high quality. Pupils' very good literacy skills are used effectively to record their thoughts and views. They know and use words like *pew*, *steeple* and *pray*. The subject makes a very positive contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Planning includes a good range of stories which promote tolerance and develop an awareness of each other's needs. Pupils in Year 2 expressed their feelings clearly in their writing about 'my special place' and the teacher treated each response very sensitively. Pupils in Year 2 have a growing knowledge of the main world religions and they learn about the similarities and differences between them. Christianity has a high profile with celebrations, such as harvest and Easter, in the local churches every year.

76. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour contribute to the positive learning environment in lessons. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 used a good range of vocabulary during a very good lesson on 'special places'. Pupils were engrossed in discussion, which was stimulated by the creation of a 'special place' in the classroom. Artefacts were used

particularly well to set the scene and pupils contributed Hindu candleholders which they had designed and made in their lessons in art and design. Candles were lit as pupils answered questions on other religions, which they had researched. The whole effect created a very moving moment. Class displays, such as the table in Year 2 which celebrates Hinduism, are used particularly well to prepare pupils for subsequent topics.

77. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has yet to monitor teaching and learning, though she monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. Visits to local churches are used well to enrich pupils' understanding of Christianity. However, the school has few resources to help pupils gain a better understanding of Sikhism and Islam. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. There was not enough evidence to make it possible to make judgements on any subjects in this area of learning. Pupils were seen working confidently and with considerable interest during one lesson in **design and technology**. Pupils in Year 2 talked confidently about their work, showing how they were working creatively in the design and making of puppets. The high quality of the puppets showed flair and great imagination. The cross-curricular use of art, craft and design is a strong feature throughout the school, effectively supporting work in other subject areas.

79. In **art and design**, sketches, collages, paintings and drawings help provide attractive displays around the school. Pupils use a wide range of media, including oil pastels, pencils, paint, and produce a good range of two and three-dimensional work. For example, pupils in Year 1 produced some outstanding paintings of fruit and vegetables. The paintings showed that pupils had made very effective use of oil pastels. Pupils' learning in art makes a valuable contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, their interpretation of the work of artists promotes cultural and multi-cultural development very effectively. Work showed richness in pupils' learning with paintings in the style of Kandinski, and self-portraits labelling parts of the body in French. The careful and colourful displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school clearly demonstrate that the subject is valued and used to enhance the learning environment for all pupils. The high quality of displays also reflects the richness of the curriculum, which allows pupils to become creative and imaginative. Pupils are encouraged to respect each other's work; such respect makes a substantial contribution to the overall ethos of the school.

80. In **music**, pupils sang tunefully and enthusiastically during assemblies and, in a good lesson, pupils in Year 2 explored ways in which sounds can be arranged, whilst developing a good understanding of simple notation of the musical patterns they had created.

81. Pupils benefit significantly from a **physical education** curriculum which is broad and includes sufficient time for them to develop skills in games, gymnastics, and dance. The engagement of subject specialists enhances pupil's learning because they are given challenging tasks and expectations are high. For example, pupils in Year 1 produced some good examples of controlled movements, which included balances and a range of imaginative sequences, during gymnastics. The pupils' very good attitudes are reflected by the teachers' skilful and energetic approach to teaching the subject. In addition, pupils have extended opportunities to take part in a good range of extra-curricular activities which place a strong emphasis on competitive conventional team games, individual sports and practical activities to boost confidence. For example, pupils were seen during an after-school club in which pupils developed confidence and their self-esteem through role-play, dance, and cooperative games.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHE is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well-planned learning opportunities for pupils to develop personal and social skills through the enriched curriculum and ethos of the school.
- The valuable opportunities for pupils to strengthen their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Commentary

82. Pupils respond very well to the well-planned PSHE provision and enrichment activities, which make an important contribution to the very good standards of behaviour and to pupils' maturity, confidence, and self-esteem. Pupils learn from an early age how to act with consideration and responsibility. Pupils have many opportunities to discuss ethical and moral issues and to consider important aspects of human relationships, such as friendship, loyalty and tolerance.

83. During circle times, teachers create good opportunities to discuss pupils' personal difficulties and concerns. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 contributed well to a discussion on bullying, responding sensitively to the feelings expressed by individuals in the group. Pupils showed a very high interest in developing their understanding of personal issues such as bullying. In another lesson, pupils reflected upon the visit they had just made to a community centre in which they had participated in a stimulating range of activities to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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