

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL**

Widnes

LEA area: Halton

Unique reference number: 111372

Headteacher: Miss J Coughlan

Lead inspector: Lois A Furness

Dates of inspection: 12 -14 April 2005

Inspection number: 267747

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:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 -7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	188
School address:	Leigh Avenue Widnes Cheshire
Postcode:	WA8 6EL
Telephone number:	0151 4243112
Fax number:	0151 4233521
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Laurence Hanrahan
Date of previous inspection:	23 November 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Bede's Catholic Infant School is an average size school situated in Appleton in Widnes. It serves the Catholic parishes of St Bede and St Raphael, taking most of its pupils from the Kingsway and Appleton areas. The majority of pupils are of a white European background (with 23 parents preferring not to say) and there are no pupils who have English as an additional language. One hundred and eighty eight pupils (87 boys and 101 girls) aged five to seven attend the school. The percentage of pupils who take up their entitlement to a free school meal (16.5%) broadly matches the national average. The percentage of pupils having special educational needs (18 %) also matches the national average but the percentage of pupils having a statement of special educational need (1.0%) is well below the national average. There are seven classes. Assessment information indicates that the majority of children start in reception with levels of attainment that mainly match those expected for their age. However, there are a significant number of children who are below the level expected. In 2000, the school was awarded Beacon status and since then it has attained a number of awards including Investor in People in 2002, Artsmark silver in 2003, Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy School status in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19431	J D Holmes	Lay inspector	
33973	P Kodger	Team inspector	English as an Additional Language Science Art and Design Design and technology Music Physical Education
33631	H Smith	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs Mathematics Information and Communication Technology Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

A very good quality of education is provided by this **very effective** school. Inspirational leadership by the headteacher has created a drive for excellence that is fully supported by good teaching, very good governance and excellent inclusion. Parents and pupils very highly value this vibrant, welcoming school. It provides **very good** value for money.

### THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- The excellent leadership and management of the headteacher have resulted in very strong teamwork and a very firm commitment to further improvement
- Year 2 pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests in 2004 was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics
- Children are given a very good start to their education in the Foundation Stage
- Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning because provision for their personal development is so strong
- The monitoring and evaluation of pupils' performance are excellent
- An innovative, very rich and very well-planned curriculum is provided for all pupils
- All groups of pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported in this extremely inclusive school
- The school's excellent partnership with parents, other local schools and the community contributes in great measure to the pupils' good achievement

When the school was previously inspected in October 1998 it was judged to be a very good school. It has very successfully maintained this position rectifying the key issue of improving provision in information and communication technology extremely well. Information and communication technology is a major strength and pupils' attainment by Year 2 is now above that expected for their age. Cultural development and the use of assessment information have improved since the last inspection and many of the very good features identified have been maintained. Overall the school has made very good improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Achievement is good.** Children start school with levels of attainment that are broadly typical for their age. The majority of children will meet the early learning goals expected for their age with a significant number of children exceeding these goals by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in Year 2 in 2004 performed very well in the National Curriculum tests. Pupil performance was well above all schools and similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading, performance was in the top five per cent of similar schools. The trend in the school's results for this age group was above the national trend.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	A	A	A*
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history and art and design. The following subjects were sampled, design and technology, geography, music and

physical education and therefore secure judgements could not be made on standards or achievement. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

**Pupils' personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** It underpins the whole ethos of the school, supports the drive for learning, and results in the pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' attendance matches the national average and is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is very good in the Foundation Stage.** The very good use of assessment information ensures that the needs of all pupils are met very well. The staff work very well together as a team sharing expertise to improve their teaching and provide interesting and challenging work for all pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. The level of challenge in learning activities is very good and expectations are high. The deployment and work of the teaching assistants and other support staff to help pupils learn are very good. The school provides a very good curriculum which is very effectively enhanced by very good personal, social and health education and by extra-curricular activities. Pupils are very well cared for, supported and guided. This and the excellent partnership the school has with their parents, the local community and nearby schools considerably enhance the pupils' learning. The school is a very warm, friendly and safe place to be.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher's excellent leadership is the major driving force in the school. It has created very effective teamwork amongst the staff, empowering those with key management roles to fulfill them very well. The monitoring and evaluation of pupil performance is excellent. Governance is very good, finance is very well managed, and all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents and pupils are highly satisfied with this school. Parents particularly appreciate the open friendly nature of the school and all comment upon how they are made to feel welcome. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy coming to school; they like their teachers and find learning fun.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

This is a very effective school and through its own excellent systems of evaluation the school clearly and accurately knows its own improvement points which are identified in the school improvement plan. Inspectors agree with these improvement points which include continuing to:

- enhance outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage
- further develop problem solving skills

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement is very good in the Foundation Stage and good overall in Years 1 and 2.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make very good progress in the reception classes
- The reading results in 2004 placed the school in the top five per cent of similar schools
- The current Year 2 pupils are attaining standards above those expected for their age in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history and art and design
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well

#### **Commentary**

1. Children start school with levels of attainment that are mainly typical for their age although in their knowledge of letter sounds, writing and mathematical calculation attainment is below that expected. They achieve very well in their reception year. Almost all have already met the goals expected for the end of the reception year in all six areas of learning and a significant proportion of children have exceeded them. This is a direct result of the early identification of children's needs and the teachers' very effective planning.
2. The 2004 national test results for Year 2 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average and the average of schools with similar proportions of pupils having free school meals. In reading, performance was in the top five per cent of similar schools. In science, on the basis of teacher assessment, performance at the expected level was above the national average and well above the national average for pupils attaining above the expected level. Over the last three years, the trend in the school's average point scores has been above the national trend. Girls attain slightly better than boys do. The school is aware of this and is implementing effective strategies to improve the performance of boys.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004**

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
Reading	18.2 ( 18.2)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.6 (16.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.2 (18.4)	16.2 (16.3 )

*There were 74 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the current Year 2 classes, standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics are above the national expectation. Pupils listen very attentively to others, they speak very confidently using a good range of vocabulary and read very well with a good understanding of what they have read. Writing is imaginative, engaging the readers' interest, and handwriting, punctuation and spelling are mostly of a pleasing standard. Pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts and their ability to apply their learning is good. In science, attainment by Year 2 is above that expected for the pupils' age and this is because of the good emphasis given to experimental and investigative science. Achievement is good overall. All staff work extremely hard to raise achievement. They have done so very successfully because the school very rigorously analyses all test and assessment outcomes and the staff consistently implement effective actions to tackle any weaknesses found. Standards are above the national expectation in information and communication technology (ICT), history and art and design. There was insufficient time during the inspection to make

secure judgements about attainment or achievement in geography, design and technology, music and physical education. However, it is evident that throughout the school, very good attention is given to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the clear, measurable targets in their individual education plans and the very good assistance they receive from teachers and support staff. The school also caters effectively for its more able pupils, ensuring that they are given suitable challenging work to do and providing them with additional support when necessary so that they reach the highest standards of which they are capable. The school also works hard through its highly effective inclusive practices to ensure that pupils are very well prepared for their work in the junior school.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are very good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is very good and attendance is matches the national average and is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and they fully enjoy their work
- Relationships are very good throughout the school
- Pupils' personal development is extremely well nurtured through the school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Pupils are fully involved in the life of the school

### **Commentary**

5. The very good personal development of the children starts from the time they start school in the reception class and is extremely well managed. The reception teachers very effectively ensure that children learn to take responsibility, listen to, and show respect for what others have to say. Pupils of all ages enjoy school and have very good attitudes to learning. They work very well together and have a very good level of trust in the adults who work with them. The very good relationships throughout the school boost pupils' confidence and make it easy for them to talk to staff and confide about any fears they may have. The personal development of the pupils is very well promoted through the curriculum, assemblies, individual support and constant encouragement from the teachers. Behaviour in class and around the school is very good and pupils confidently say that there is no bullying and that they would feel happy to report it to staff if any did occur. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection and there have been no recent exclusions.
6. Pupils readily grasp the many very good opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness throughout the school day. The use of music in the hall during break time and at lunchtime helps to create a very calm environment. The school warmly welcomes visitors, and staff and pupils are very friendly and courteous towards them. The pupils study different religions and there have been visitors from different cultures. They know what is right and wrong and they learn to follow rules and be self-disciplined. The spiritual development is very good. For example, pupils had the opportunity to observe the wonder of nature when they excitedly watched a snail eating a leaf.
7. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in some of the everyday jobs around school that effectively helps to develop their sense of social responsibility. The pupils are very enthusiastic about the 'friendship stop' and being 'playground friends', roles that they take very seriously. They are consulted on some issues, for example identifying resources for playground activities. They really enjoy the use of these games and facilities which allow pupils to co-operate with each other very well. Lunchtimes are very orderly with pupils enjoying meals in the hall and also during good weather make use of the 'Mary, Mary garden'

where they can enjoy packed lunches outside and socialise with their friends. The garden is a very good resource which has a very good impact on the social development of the pupils.

8. Cultural development is very good and is much improved since the previous inspection. Visits and visitors very effectively promote this aspect of pupils' learning and foster their personal, social and independent learning skills. The school arranges many visits and visitors that give pupils very good opportunities to learn about local and national culture. The school very effectively promotes an understanding of the different cultures found in Britain today.
9. Attendance matches the national average and the level of unauthorised absence is well below the national average. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and parents contacted if the school feels that there is a problem. Parents are very good at notifying the school regarding absence and the majority of pupils attend school punctually.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003-2004 (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.9	School data :	0.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning is good overall and is very good in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum, the support and guidance offered to the pupils are very good and the school's partnership with parents is excellent. Assessment information is used very well to inform the next steps of learning.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching, which is very good in the Foundation Stage, is **good** overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good features of teaching include the encouragement and engagement of pupils and the high expectations that teachers have of work
- Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage gives children a very good start to their education
- Teaching assistants and other support staff are deployed very effectively
- The use of assessment to plan the next steps of learning is very good
- The inclusion of all pupils in activities is excellent

**Commentary**

10. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good features. Pupils benefit very much from their high interest levels and the teachers' strong subject knowledge. Challenge is very good in learning activities and expectations are high. This gives pupils the confidence to achieve well as they work hard at the tasks that are usually matched very well to their ability. Homework is used successfully to extend learning. Tasks are constructed to involve pupils in the further study of class topics and to extend their research and independent learning skills. Very good use is made of English and mathematics skills to support learning in other subjects, for example in science and history. Information and communication technology is used very well as a resource to promote learning.

11. In Foundation Stage lessons, very well organised activities promote very good learning and independence across all six nationally agreed areas of learning and ensure that children achieve very well in their reception year. All members of staff contribute to the very well-planned learning activities. They have established a warm atmosphere and lively environment in which all children feel safe to learn. There is a very good balance between the activities that children choose and those that are directed by the staff. The staff assess the children's learning very well. National guidance is used very effectively to develop assessment profiles on all children, building on the previous assessments received from the children's pre-school settings. Assessments are made frequently and needs are quickly identified and catered for. All children receive a very good level of support to meet their individual needs.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	11	4	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

12. Most teachers set high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour and, as a result, pupils learn well. Pupils are very interested in their work and work very well both independently and collaboratively. Very good collaboration was seen in the ICT suite as pupils worked in pairs researching information about the past. On a very few occasions, the work given to more able pupils is too easy, as was seen in mathematics, or the text given to pupils to read is too hard. When this happens, pupils become restless, losing concentration and motivation. In most lessons however, the work is well matched to pupils' abilities and pupils concentrate very well. The school has identified speaking and listening as an area it wishes to improve, and small group discussions are used well to enhance these skills.
13. The deployment and work of the teaching assistants and other support staff to help pupils learn are very good. They are involved in planning and take a prominent role during lessons. The well briefed support assistants are allocated to the groups in most need of help in particular lessons, be they pupils with special educational needs, average attaining pupils who need a boost in their learning or higher attainers who need an extra push to show what they are really capable of achieving.
14. Assessment procedures are very good and the use of assessment information is very good. Regular evaluation of pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science maintains a clear flow of information about their progress. The tracking of individual pupils is very effective and informs decisions about future learning targets. These targets are focused very well and reviewed regularly. They are used well by pupils. The assessments made in other subjects are not as sharp and assessing and recording progress in other subjects is an area that the school is working upon at the present time. Overall, the needs of all pupils are very well met and the school demonstrates its very high commitment to the full inclusion of all pupils in all that is on offer.

**The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is very good. Statutory requirements are met very well and the curriculum is considerably enhanced by a very good range of enrichment opportunities. Accommodation and resources for learning are very good overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been excellent improvement in ICT facilities which are used very effectively to support work in other subjects
- All aspects of creativity are strongly developed
- A very good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum

- Very effective use of support staff ensures a positive contribution to pupils' learning
- Very good emphasis on personal, social and health provision is made in all subjects

## **Commentary**

15. The breadth of curricular opportunities provided for all pupils is very good. The curriculum provision for both English and mathematics makes effective use of the respective national literacy and numeracy programmes of work. There have been significant improvements in the provision for ICT which was unsatisfactory in the last inspection. There is now an ICT suite for class use, as well as interactive whiteboards which have been installed in each classroom. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support learning across other subjects and also to record pupils' work through the use of digital photography. The school is rightly proud of its rich and varied creative curriculum which has been developed over a number of years through an initial involvement with several other local schools. Very well-planned links are made between different subjects to provide an integrated, cross-curricular approach to learning and teaching. The school's annual Arts Week provides an exciting and eagerly anticipated opportunity to showcase a range of knowledge and skills which have been developed over the year. During this year's event, all pupils had the opportunity to take part in a performance, make masks, print T-shirts, produce musical instruments and exhibit their work in an art exhibition.
16. Pupils' experiences are enriched further by a range of visits to museums, galleries and the local park, and by working alongside visiting artists such as a potter and a willow sculptor. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities very effectively extend pupils' learning and experiences beyond the school day. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education.
17. There is a very good match of both teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and best use is made of their experience and expertise. They complement each other well in providing for their pupils. The support staff have a positive impact on pupils' learning, progress and overall development. Inclusion is excellent and no child is excluded from any aspect of the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is also very good. There is a learning support teacher who ensures that effective individual education plans are provided and implemented. All pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
18. The accommodation is clean and tidy and enhanced very effectively by high quality displays. Classrooms are adequately sized and provide a bright, cheerful and stimulating learning environment. There is a good-sized hall, some additional rooms for group activities and the well-equipped ICT suite. Some additional building work is about to commence which will enhance the entrance area. As part of its commitment to inclusion, the school plans to provide barrier-free access. Good use is made of the attractive outdoor classroom area, the 'Mary Mary garden'. This provision for Foundation Stage children will be significantly improved when plans to provide direct access from the reception teaching rooms are implemented. The outdoor hard play areas are attractively marked with a range of games and the site is enhanced by murals and plants. Overall, the school's accommodation and particularly its resources for learning are very good.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school takes very good care of pupils' health, safety and well-being. It provides them with very good advice, support and guidance. It makes very good efforts to seek and act upon pupils' views.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good pastoral support is offered to all pupils resulting in pupils who feel happy, secure and confident
- Very good induction procedures ensure children very quickly settle into school life
- The school involves pupils in helping to improve the quality of school life and this contributes very positively to pupils' self-esteem
- The systems for monitoring pupil performance are excellent

## **Commentary**

19. The school is a very friendly, welcoming community where great emphasis is placed on strongly held principles of caring for and valuing the individual. Its very high degree of success in taking care of its pupils rests on a combination of very thorough assessment procedures, a strong and well-organised drive to improve pupils' self esteem and very good relationships between adults and pupils. The very good practice includes the valuing of pupils' contributions in lessons and displays around school that emphasise the individual special nature of each pupil. This promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem both in and out of the classroom. The school has very good systems in place for the early identification and support for each pupil who has any kind of special need.
20. Recently, the school received a very favourable inspection report from the local authority on its health and safety practices. Staff and governors are safety conscious, regularly carrying out checks and risk assessments to ensure that pupils are not put in danger within the school grounds or buildings or on visits. Appropriate systems for the treatment and recording of accidents are in place. Child protection procedures are up-to-date and thorough. Lunchtime staff undergo training to ensure that pupils are well looked after during the lunch break. There is a very strong sense from all staff of working as a team for the good of pupils' well being.
21. Very good induction arrangements enable young children, who have attended a comparatively large number of early years' settings, to move into their new school happily and with confidence. Parents and carers are well supported by informative induction meetings and opportunities to attend workshops. There are well developed procedures to enable pupils who join the school midway through the year to feel at home, and pupils transferring to junior school are supported by very well organised procedures that have been developed and refined over a number of years.
22. Pupils' views are sought regularly, often informally, and their ideas valued by the adults in the school. Circle time activities provide pupils with the opportunities to express their thoughts and concerns. Pupils have been involved in several building improvement plans, for example by selecting equipment for the 'Mary Mary garden' and the school playground. The 'playground friend' scheme helps to ensure that pupils always have a friend to play with at playtime.
23. The systems for monitoring pupils' academic and personal progress are excellent. Pupils' work is assessed and targets are set which are shared with pupils and their parents. Pupil progress is tracked very efficiently and any difficulties are identified, allowing appropriate intervention or support to be provided. Analysis of data is very rigorous and thorough. The school also tracks pupils' social development very carefully. This is another tool which effectively supports the school ethos of valuing each pupil as an individual.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's partnership with parents is excellent and the school has excellent links with other schools, colleges and the local community.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have the highest opinions of the school and very strongly approve of the education provided for their children
- The school has excellent links with other schools and community partnerships

### Commentary

24. Responses from the parental questionnaire and the parents' meeting indicate excellent support for the school with no areas for concern. Talking to parents during the inspection confirmed the high regard parents have for this school. They very much appreciate the open, friendly nature of the school and all comment upon how they are made to feel welcomed into the school. Concerns and suggestions are always listened to and many parents are willing to help the school in any way they can. Inspection findings confirm these views.
25. Parents are provided with very good opportunities to attend courses and workshops to help them support their child's learning. These are very much appreciated. Very good information is given to them about the curriculum. Regular consultation evenings are held and the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are very helpful and informative. Further regular information about the school's work is presented in friendly and informative newsletters.
26. The school provides a report on pupils' progress which informs parents of what their child can do but they do not give a clear indication of what needs to be done next to improve. However, discussions are held with parents about targets for improvement. Parents are very willing to be involved in the school and they helped to raise funds to improve the external environment.
27. The school is very active within the community and has excellent links with other schools and colleges. The school works with eight main partner primaries and many other schools as part of its Beacon status. A wide range of visits and visitors give pupils a taste of life outside school and adds enjoyment to the curriculum. There are excellent links with the community with the school facilities being used by the parish and family learning activities such as the use of the school computer facilities. The school is involved in initial teacher training placements for a local college. Very good mechanisms are in place with the receiving junior school. Information is passed between the schools, the junior school staff come into the school and pupils visit the receiving school. The schools work closely together with subject coordinators meeting regularly to discuss curriculum issues to ensure a smooth transition. The excellent links with schools and the community have a very positive impact on the education of the pupils.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and that of key staff is very good, Governance is very good and management systems support pupils' achievement extremely well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has created a drive for excellence
- Inclusion is excellent
- Governors know their school very well and provide very good levels of support and challenge for the headteacher and the staff
- The evaluation of pupil performance is excellent
- The priorities in the school management plan are supported by very thorough strategic financial planning and well considered performance objectives for all staff

### Commentary

28. The very good leadership and management identified in the last inspection have been maintained. The headteacher leads a very strong, committed team of staff and governors,

supported by all parents. The management structure enables the whole team to implement the shared, resolute aim of constant improvement. The pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and very pleasing academic standards demonstrate that the school successfully accomplishes its aims and vision. The attention given to the promotion of equal opportunities and to the full inclusion of all pupils in all activities is excellent. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and the local education authority has recognised the headteacher's expertise as an exemplar for other schools. Her influence reaches beyond the school as she and members of the senior management team lead training for other schools and share their experiences and expertise with staff who visit their school.

29. The governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this knowledge effectively to support the senior management team. They are equally committed to raising standards and very supportive of the work of the school and the headteacher, but they also question and challenge decisions. They meet their statutory requirements. They monitor and evaluate the work of the school conscientiously including their policy to promote racial equality. The effective links with subject co-ordinators and with the special educational needs co-ordinator give governors a good understanding of the school's performance. Many governors have attended training to increase their knowledge and all governors carry out their duties in an organised way. They have a good range of expertise and experience which they use very effectively through a system of committees that meet regularly to plan and review the work of the school. The finance committee gives a firm steer to the school budget to support priorities for improvement. Best value for money is sought and judgements are linked to the educational planning and the priorities set for improvement.
30. The management of the school is very good. It is strategic and is very securely focused on continuous improvement. The school evaluates its own performance extremely thoroughly and acts meticulously on the outcomes. The monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and subject leaders is closely linked to performance management and is effective in improving weaker aspects of teaching and learning. This very successfully encourages staff to be self critical and they constantly seek to develop and broaden their skills. The school development plan is a very well structured and very valuable management tool. There is a very obvious link between the aim of raising standards and performance management procedures. This is seen by the excellent improvement in the use of ICT following the previous inspection. The senior management team regularly reviews the work of the school and the progress of the school development plan and co-ordinators have time out of class to monitor and develop their subjects. Very good induction procedures successfully support new members of staff enabling them very quickly to become effective members of the staff team. Very good financial management at all levels supports initiatives in the school development plan. Spending is targeted towards raising standards and governors have budgeted carefully to continue to improve access to the outside accommodation for the children in the Foundation Stage.

***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	580519
Total expenditure	559484
Expenditure per pupil	2960

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	74837
Balance carried forward to the next	21035

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

**AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

31. As in the previous inspection, provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. The quality of teaching is very good and a very well planned curriculum caters very effectively for the learning needs of each child. Children start the reception class with the levels of attainment mainly matching those expected for their age, although in some aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, attainment is below age related expectations. The staff's very good communications with parents and the school's very good induction arrangements help the children to settle quickly into school routines. Their learning is very carefully monitored and their progress is thoroughly checked and recorded on a daily basis. All staff very successfully encourage children to participate in activities in all areas of learning. This contributes very well to the children's very good achievement and generates enjoyment and enthusiasm. The children are very well prepared for their work in Year 1.
32. Very good provision is made for children who have learning difficulties. The care and patience with which the support staff work with these children contribute in great measure to their progress. All of the staff are very highly committed to ensuring that every child is included in all that the school has to offer and they work very hard to bring this about. Accommodation and resources for learning are very good, both in and out of doors. Children especially like the opportunities to go out into the 'Mary Mary garden' which is an attractive, secure, well laid out area that houses a good range of large and small play equipment. The area is used very effectively for well-focused learning activities across all six areas of learning.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is very good because these skills are very successfully built into everything that goes on in the Foundation Stage
- Children readily share and take turns; they behave very well and form very good relationships with each other and with the staff

### **Commentary**

33. Almost all children have already met the early learning goals in this area of learning having made very good progress since they started. They are very well behaved, confident youngsters who manage themselves and their learning very well. They know the routines and what is expected of them. They sit quietly during whole class sessions, listening carefully to the teacher and to each other as they share ideas. They confidently speak in front of the whole class about the models they have made. They work very well together as a whole class and show very good levels of concentration when working in groups, and when they are required to work on their own. They are sensitive to the needs of others and are very much aware of the consequences of their actions. Children with specific learning difficulties fit into this situation very well. They receive very good support and become equally valued members of the reception. All of this happens because the children are taught very well how to distinguish right from wrong, to care for themselves, and to give and receive respect, accepting that everyone is different and has the right to be so. This very good development sets them up very well for their school lives and beyond, and underpins the whole ethos of the school and the very good relationships in all age groups. By the end of the reception year the majority of children will be above the goals expected for their age because of very good teaching in the reception classes.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most reception children speak clearly and have a very good knowledge of letter sounds and patterns
- Every opportunity is taken to increase the children's knowledge, understanding and use of language
- The quality of teaching is very good and therefore children achieve very well

### **Commentary**

34. Almost all children speak clearly, with confidence and control and clarify their thinking through discussion with the staff and with each other. This was especially noticeable as children discussed how to make a sandwich during a good lesson in the ICT suite. They enjoy books and many, when given the choice, choose to sit reading books and talking to each other about the characters in different stories. They read a good range of simple words accurately and enjoy listening to stories, rhymes and poems. Children participate wholeheartedly in exciting, very well planned activities as they explore the meanings and sounds of words. During a 'Bingo game' children recognised a range of letters, knowing the sounds they made and many could think of words that either started with the letter sound or had the sound in the word. Almost all children write their own names. A number of more able children are already writing in accurately constructed sentences, using capital letters and full stops correctly. Children achieve very well because they are presented with a very wide range of creative and imaginative learning activities. The very well planned support for children who find learning difficult is ensuring that they have every opportunity to catch up with the rest of the class. Children are very effectively encouraged to use their communication, language and literacy skills in all areas of learning. Teaching is very good and the majority of children are at the early learning goals now and some are well on the way to exceeding them by the end of reception.

### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have a very good understanding of shape and number which they use well to solve simple problems
- The quality of teaching is very good and children achieve very well

### **Commentary**

35. Children work enthusiastically on a variety of mathematical activities. They demonstrate a good understanding of number to at least 10 with more able children ordering numbers to 20 and beyond in many different practical activities. They solve simple money problems, for example, through pricing articles in the shop and counting out change. They are beginning to understand the use of ordinals and accurately sequence numbers and objects. A very engaging lesson successfully showed how children sorted objects correctly according to a range of different criteria. Their knowledge of shape is very good and children can name accurately two dimensional shapes such as square, triangle and circle. Mathematical skills are consolidated very well in all other areas of learning and children are well on the way to exceeding the early learning goals because of very good teaching.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good and children achieve very well
- Very good use is made of the outside environment to promote this area of learning

### **Commentary**

36. The teacher's very effective use of a good range of resources generates curiosity and excitement in the children as they play with different toys and discuss why they think some toys are old and some are new. They use the environment in and around the school, making very good use of the 'Mary Mary garden' to find out about forces in the context of pushing and pulling. Children have good 'mouse' control, dragging and dropping articles on screen when making a delicious 'sandwich'. They record changes in the weather accurately and correctly identify what type of clothing they might wear in the different seasons thus enhancing their personal development alongside their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are taught about their own faith and they are introduced to the major stories of other important world faiths. This gives them a good start in developing an understanding of and respect for the values and beliefs of others. Almost all children are well on the way to attaining the early learning goals in this area of learning with a significant number exceeding them.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well and are on course to at least meet the early learning goals for physical development
- The quality of teaching is very good and staff support all pupils very well, developing in them very good control of movement and of large and small equipment and tools

### **Commentary**

37. Children move with confidence, imagination and a good understanding of their own and others' safety. They use space well in the hall, moving in different directions without bumping into each other. Children have a very good understanding of the purpose of warm up sessions prior to physical exercise and they also understand the importance of cooling down afterwards. They follow instructions very well and confidently demonstrate their skills, learning from each other very well because the teacher helps them to recognise what is good practice and to try to emulate it. They manipulate small tools and equipment very well, for example, pencils, paintbrushes, glue and scissors. The staff successfully ensure that they do so with due attention to health and safety. Children with learning difficulties are very well supported so that they, too, take a full part in all physical activities. Teaching is very good and children's achievement is very good. The majority of children will meet the early learning goals expected for their age with a significant number of children exceeding these goals.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good and therefore children achieve very well
- Art and design skills are very well taught and children have a well developed understanding of the work of different artists

## **Commentary**

38. Creative development is very effectively fostered through a wide range of worthwhile activities covering art and design, music and role play. Teaching and learning are very good and so children's achievement is also very good. Children explore colour and shape and pattern as they discuss and paint pictures of toys. They sing simple songs and rhymes tunefully keeping together and adding actions, showing a good sense of rhythm. They create different sounds playing instruments, gently, quickly and more loudly. Children are encouraged to discuss what they hear and how they feel, with one child describing the sound made by a scraper as 'like the sea.' They respond very well to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel as they select and work with different tools and materials and use their imagination very well when playing in the role play area. By the end of reception the majority of children will have at least met the goals in this area and a significant number will have exceeded the goals.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of this subject are very good
- Good teaching, based on the excellent use of assessment information, ensures that the learning needs of all pupils are fully met
- Achievement is good and pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age in reading and writing
- Literacy skills are very effectively promoted in all areas of the school's work

## Commentary

39. The pupils' good standards and good achievement are the result of very good leadership and management in maintaining the very good position identified in the previous inspection. The subject leader has ensured that the National Literacy Strategy has been very effectively adapted to the needs of this school and that all staff are very clear about how to teach literacy in an interesting and meaningful way. Excellent analysis of all test and assessment information and very perceptive monitoring of teaching and learning ensure that any weaknesses are quickly picked up and addressed. Teachers from other schools visit this one to see good practice and the co-ordinator provides some training for other schools to assist their development of literacy.
40. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some major strengths. Assessment information is used exceptionally well to set targets and plan activities that match pupils' learning needs throughout the school. Records of progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening are comprehensive and based on the thorough marking of pupils' work, alongside the very rigorous analysis of test and assessment outcomes. Following this, discussions with pupils and their parents ensure that all work together to help the pupils to learn. While the content of the work remains the same for all pupils, the work planned matches the levels at which they are working and support is targeted towards the areas of greatest need. This very often involves assisting pupils with special educational needs but, where relevant, it also involves assisting other pupils, including higher attainers. Thus all pupils are fully included in everything and given the best possible chance to succeed at the level of which they are capable. This results in pupils who greatly enjoy literacy lessons and work very well both independently and collaboratively. Very occasionally, pupils are given work that is too hard and this results in loss of concentration.
41. Standards in reading and writing are above those expected for the pupils' age. They read very well and demonstrate a very good understanding of what they have read. By Year 2, all pupils very confidently use letter sounds, pictures and the context of what they are reading, to do so. Pupils read widely and speak enthusiastically about their favourite books including authors. The homework programme, well supported by parents, contributes in great measure to pupils' learning and progress at school. Writing standards are good. Pupils in Year 1 successfully write sentences that describe healthy foods and higher attaining pupils are beginning to use alliteration to make their sentences more interesting. In Year 2, pupils learn about the use of persuasive language as they write letters to the Prime Minister. Higher attaining pupils start sentences in different ways and join sentences together using a wide range of connecting words that make their writing flow and easy to read. Throughout the school, punctuation is good, developing from the mostly accurate use of capital letters and full stops in Year 1, to the more accurate use of a wide range of punctuation by the end of Year 2. Almost all pupils have a neat, legible handwriting style in Year 2 and work is very well presented.
42. Speaking and listening has been identified as an area for development and a variety of strategies have been introduced to encourage the development of these skills. Most pupils confidently respond to questions, speaking in complete sentences, stating their ideas and opinions clearly and listening carefully to what others have to say. However, there are a small minority of pupils, mainly boys, who at times find it difficult to maintain concentration and

teachers do not always use strategies to ensure that all pupils stay involved in the speaking and listening activities.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

43. Overall, teachers use their good subject knowledge very effectively to promote language and literacy skills across the curriculum. A particularly good example of this was observed in a history lesson, when writing activities were extended beyond recording facts to thinking about what it must have been like to have been in Scutari Hospital to develop pupils' ability to write with empathy. This example demonstrate the very good contribution English makes to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Writing skills are promoted effectively in other subjects such as science and religious education where written work shows good evidence of pupils writing prayers, poems, stories and recording investigations. In ICT, pupils use computer programs to consolidate grammar and spelling, and use computers as a tool for learning to edit or improve their writing as well as a tool for researching information.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- As a result of good teaching, high expectations and realistic challenge, the majority of Year 2 pupils are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy mathematics because of the very good use of resources including ICT
- Pupils work very well both independently and collaboratively
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good
- The analysis and use of performance data are excellent

#### **Commentary**

44. Overall, the school does well for its pupils with all groups making good progress and achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported by their teachers and teaching assistants, and therefore achieve as well as their peers. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age and achievement is good.
45. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning is good with some very good features. In one Year 2 lesson the interactive whiteboard was used effectively, during the oral and mental starter, to help pupils to halve and quarter a number of elephants. This resource helped to maintain the pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Later in the same lesson the interactive whiteboard was used very well to determine how whole shapes might look when only one half or one quarter is visible. The teacher was able to use a range of different shapes to ensure that pupils fully understood the concept before asking them to complete a mathematical investigation. In all lessons, teachers demonstrate a good command of the subject and this helps them to give clear explanations to pupils. Lesson planning is effective. For example, in Year 2 the weekly plan has clear notes about pupils' achievements in the previous lesson. As a result, the challenge level was just right and pupils achieved well. Most lessons challenge pupils, especially in the area of developing mathematical skills and understanding. For example, many pupils use a range of calculation strategies confidently and enjoy explaining their methods to others. Occasionally, time is not used well and the work given to pupils is too easy, particularly for higher attaining pupils. However, most pupils have very good attitudes to learning and work very well both independently and collaboratively. Attractive interactive classroom displays which ask questions, promote the investigation or reinforcement of mathematical skills in Year 1 and 2. The displays, including number lines, are also used effectively during mathematics lessons.

46. Leadership and management of mathematics are very good. Analysis of performance data is excellent and information gained is shared with teachers in order to target individual and groups of pupils for extra support. Targets are also shared with parents who are given the opportunity to attend mathematical workshops in order to support learning at home. The use of ICT has greatly improved since the previous inspection and the interactive whiteboards are having a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm. Mathematics is very well resourced and improvement since the last inspection is good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

47. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop and appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, they read dates in history, use graphs to record data in geography and weigh and measure materials in science. Information and communication technology skills (ICT) are used effectively to produce graphs and charts.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils attainment by Year 2 is above that expected for their age
- Very good links are made with other subjects
- The focus on investigative work is a strength
- Very good aspects of teaching include effective questioning and deployment of support staff
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and they have confidence to ask questions and experiment
- The subject leader shows a very good understanding of the curriculum and has contributed well to the development of skills in science
- Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning in this subject

### **Commentary**

48. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age and achievement is good. The school has a very well-planned, integrated curriculum which links scientific learning across other subject areas; for example in Year 2, the study of materials was linked to the visit of a potter working with clay and the understanding electrical circuits contributed to the construction of working model lighthouses in design and technology. A strength is the focus on investigative work. Investigations carried out during lessons are supported and developed by interactive displays in classrooms where pupils are encouraged to continue a hands-on approach. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are able to work both independently and collaboratively. These factors result in pupils who are confident learners, willing to ask questions, make predictions and experiment to draw conclusions. Pupils worked co-operatively in groups in a Year 2 lesson making decisions about how to allocate items to different food groups. At the same time, three pupils used the computer to undertake a linked research task for the class. Pupils are encouraged to show very good respect for resources and develop a very good awareness for health and safety issues. A good example was when Year 1 pupils showed very good care and sensitivity to the minibeasts they had collected and later returned to the garden. The subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
49. The quality of learning and teaching is good. All staff provide very good challenge to pupils and have high expectations. Particularly effective is the use of questioning strategies which engage pupils and deepen both their observational skills and understanding. Very good use is made of support staff and they are very effective in ensuring that all pupils, including those

with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were engrossed in finding and studying minibeasts in the 'Mary, Mary garden'. Once back in the classroom, they were able to draw conclusions from their initial observations by using an electronic microscope to compare the movements of a snail and a centipede. Pupils' work in Year 2 shows an understanding of what makes a fair test and they are challenged by 'thinking points' such as 'Do big seeds germinate faster than small seeds?'. Most pupils are able to use scientific terminology such as photosynthesis, dispersal and germinate with both confidence and understanding. Occasionally, tasks do not engage the interest of all pupils and the teacher does not use effective strategies to ensure that pupils make the best use of available time. Learning is supported by a range of very good quality equipment and reference books. The use of ICT is now good and there is evidence of its use in pupils' work; for example as a classification tool and through the use of digital photography. Learning is also enhanced by a range of visits; for example a visit to the park stimulated a discussion about why plants grew so tall in the greenhouse. Pupils' written work is well-presented and teachers' marking often includes comments of support and frequently poses questions and gives advice to pupils on the next steps for learning. Teachers' assessment books are used very effectively to track pupils' progress and achievements.

50. The subject leader is experienced, enthusiastic and well-informed. She provides very good leadership and management of the subject. She has a good understanding of the strengths and the areas for development. Monitoring is carried out through a combination of observing lessons, looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work. The focus for monitoring has been to ensure that opportunities are created that encourage effectively pupils' exploration, questioning and the expression of ideas and opinions.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Improvement since the previous inspection in this subject is excellent
- Pupils' ICT skill levels are above the level expected for their age as a result of good teaching
- Teaching assistants and other adults support pupils' learning very well
- Pupils greatly enjoy this subject and work very well both independently and collaboratively
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good

### **Commentary**

51. From being a key issue of the last inspection, ICT is now a strength of the school. At the time of the last inspection the standards pupils attained were judged to be below those expected for their age but now, by Year 2, pupils' attainment is above that expected. Pupils confidently use the internet to research information, for example, to extend their knowledge of the Crimean War. They open a website using 'favourites', navigate the website and use hot spots to find out more about Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole and the Scutari hospital. They use their skills to find the answers to a series of questions covering several different periods of history. Year 1 pupils manipulate a 'mouse' to log on, use a cursor and scroll an index in order to find out more about mini-beasts for their class topic. All pupils achieve well and inclusion is excellent because all adults ensure that all pupils are able to access all activities.
52. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 1 and 2 is good overall with some very good features. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, which helps them to ask focused questions. For example, in Year 2, the teacher asked pupils how they had found out that Athena was the name of Florence Nightingale's pet owl. Pupils then eagerly explained the route they had followed to extract this information. Teachers are very confident in teaching specific skills and this helps to generate much enthusiasm amongst the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to collaborate and, as a result, work very well in pairs. All pupils, who have very

good attitudes to learning, seize these good opportunities and this helps them to achieve well. When talking to pupils it is evident that they are very enthusiastic and positive about their ICT work.

53. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader provides a very good role model, has very good subject knowledge and is able to provide clear direction and support for her colleagues. A clear and well-defined development plan has ensured that new resources have been introduced systematically, with an appropriate level of training for teachers, to ensure that they are used effectively to support learning. Digital cameras are used very effectively to record evidence for each subject area. Improvement since the previous inspection is excellent. Resources overall for ICT are very good.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

The school has a large bank of software to help staff ensure that they make full use of pupils' ICT skills in other subjects. There is internet access and the interactive whiteboards in each classroom are used effectively to support learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

54. No overall judgements are made about provision in **geography** and **history** as these subjects were sampled during the inspection.
55. In **geography**, pupils have a secure understanding of the features, climates and ways of life found in their local environment and contrasting locations. For example, Year 2 pupils extend their learning about their local environment by visiting a park and making maps of it. There are good cross-curricular links made in this subject. For example an Arts Week included a range of exciting opportunities for Year 1 pupils to study Africa through dance in addition to their written, art and design and ICT work. Pupils' work is well presented and digital photography has been used very effectively to record activities. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards of achievement in this subject.
56. Pupils are enthused when talking about **historical** events and famous people and clearly enjoy their learning in this subject. They are knowledgeable and articulate showing a good understanding of events that happened in the past. The majority of pupils are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age and achievement is good. Pupils in Year 2 speak confidently about famous people associated with the Crimean War and enjoyed conducting further research during ICT lessons. Outside visits have been used well to enhance teaching and learning, and a visit to Wigan Pier, by Year 1 pupils, particularly excited and inspired their study of this period in history. Digital photography is used very well to support learning and this subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and moral development.
57. Leadership and management are very good. Subject co-ordinators are knowledgeable and provide good direction for their subjects. The cross-curricular links that have been made have helped to ensure that pupils' attitudes to both subjects are very good. The school is very well resourced and improvement in the school's provision for ICT has significantly enhanced opportunities for research. A wide range of information books are also available to support learning in these subjects.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

58. No lessons were observed in **art and design**, **design and technology** or **physical education**. Only one lesson was observed in **music**. Therefore, no overall judgement can be made about provision in these subjects or standards and achievement in design and

technology, music and physical education. Leadership and management are very good in all subjects. The school is committed to enhancing the creative arts and is member of the small schools Arts Project. There is a well-planned, integrated approach to the creative curriculum with good links made across several subjects. Topics studied are built around the national guidelines for each subject. A very successful Arts Week is held annually in school and this is eagerly anticipated by pupils, parents and staff. The school was awarded the nationally recognised Artsmark silver award in 2003 and is currently working towards achieving gold status. Learning is enriched by a range of visits, visitors such as a potter and the willow weaver and extra-curricular activities. All subjects contribute very well to pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

59. In **art and design**, pupils are encouraged to develop their visual observation skills and creatively represent their interpretations in a range of media. There are attractive and informative displays of work involving clay modelling, block printing, decorative mask making and studies of the work of Van Gogh and Lowry in various media. Pupils' achievements are good and by Year 2 they attain standards that are above those expected for their age. The visit to the Lowry Art Gallery particularly inspired pupils in Year 2 with one pupil describing how he had learnt that it was important to concentrate during drawing activities. Digital photographs show pupils clearly absorbed during the visit and the subsequent follow up work. Pupils spoke with confidence and enthusiasm about the experience. Pupils said how much they enjoyed Art Club with one pupil describing how it provided the opportunity to *'Make and do things you've never done before'*.
60. Evidence from the pupils' work in **design and technology** shows that pupils understand the design process and that they have good opportunities to evaluate their work. Good links are made with other subjects, for example, Year 2 pupils used the stimulus of the story of 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' to design and create model lighthouses. These were made into working models by applying their knowledge and skills about electrical circuits taught in science. In literacy, some pupils then produced pieces of extended writing which the class plan to make into a book about the further adventures of 'Mr. Grindley'. In Year 1, pupils are sewing butterflies, which complement their fabric work in art and design about ladybirds and snails and link effectively with their study of minibeasts in science.
61. Pupils were very enthusiastic about **music** with one pupil commenting that *'It makes you feel glad'* and another stating that *'It helps my brain work, makes it switch on'*. Standards and achievement in the one lesson observed were good. Pupils were introduced to the technical terms of tempo, pitch, duration and dynamics and were beginning to use these in their discussions. They were also able to demonstrate their understanding of the terms when working with instruments. Singing was also heard during assembly time. It was rhythmic and tuneful. Pupils engaged with enthusiasm during lively hymns and with thoughtful expressions during quiet ones, leading to a very spiritual atmosphere throughout. Resources are very good. There is an attractive, informative and interactive display of instruments in the hall, as well as sets of class instruments. Pupils treat instruments with care and respect. There is a school choir and pupils take part in the Halton Music Festival.
62. Resources for **physical education** are good. The hall has a range of large apparatus to ensure that pupils are able to develop the necessary skills. There is also a good range of small equipment and a good hard surface playground for outdoor work. The school is very committed to ensuring that all pupils are able to access the full curriculum. Pupils understand very well the link between exercise, health and fitness. Last year the school was awarded Healthy Schools status. The subject leader has worked with local authority's physical education adviser to review and develop the scheme of work for dance and the curriculum is extended effectively by after-school football coaching.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

63. Personal, social and health education and citizenship was sampled during the inspection. However it is evident that this aspect of the pupils' education is very effectively promoted

throughout all subjects. The school has a very positive ethos and provides a wide range of activities for pupils to increase their confidence and self esteem. On the occasions when the whole class is gathered together, pupils learn to collaborate, listen to each other and share ideas. Education about sex and relationships and about the uses and misuses of drugs is appropriately provided for pupils of this young age. An awareness of the need for healthy lifestyles is being developed successfully in a range of subjects such as science and physical education and the school achieved the Healthy Schools' Award in the previous year. Teaching ensures that pupils learn respect for people, property and premises throughout the day. Pupils are well supported by the 'friendship stop' during play and lunch times. Fund raising for numerous charities heightens the pupils' awareness of the needs of others and makes an important contribution towards their development as world citizens. Visiting speakers, such as health professionals and church leaders, increase the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the role they themselves might play in helping to create a positive and supportive local community. The subject leader provides very good leadership and management in this subject.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

### **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1

How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*