

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **EVELYN STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 110968

Headteacher: Mr D J Tucker

Reporting inspector: Mr J D Eadie  
20191

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> April - 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 213947

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Evelyn Street Warrington Cheshire
Postcode:	WA5 1BD
Telephone number:	(01925) 495567
Fax number:	(01925) 495564
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Beryl Galvin
Date of previous inspection:	21 <sup>st</sup> June 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	Mr J D Eadie	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19443	Mrs N Walker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21107	Mr C Coombs	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language	
03191	Mr J Curley	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Art Design and technology Religious education	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils?
01743	Mr D Roberts	Team Inspector	English Physical education	
22182	Miss F Robinson	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History Music	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school takes children from three to 11 years of age and is situated in a residential area close to the centre of the industrial town of Warrington. The area is one of some deprivation; for example, the proportion of children in overcrowded housing is above average. An above average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. There are 156 pupils in the school of whom 14 are in the Reception class. A further 52 part-time pupils attend the Nursery. All but ten of the pupils are of white British heritage, and all of these ten speak English as their second language. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. There is one pupil who has a statement of special educational need. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the Nursery and Reception class is generally below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Evelyn Street Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The serious weaknesses which were found at the last inspection are no longer in evidence. Although standards at the age of eleven were still well below average in the national tests last year, these pupils had their education disrupted significantly by staff absence. Standards are now improving. The quality of teaching is good and the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The quality of teaching is good and the pupils therefore learn well.
- The education provided in the Nursery and Reception class is very good and these young children are making good progress.
- The standards reached in science at the age of seven are above average.
- The school makes good provision for those pupils with special educational needs.
- Behaviour is good in the school, the pupils have good attitudes to their work and relationships are very good throughout the school. The school makes good provision to develop these aspects and the pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and develop their social skills.
- The school has worked hard to provide a bright, spotlessly clean and very stimulating learning environment for the pupils.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in writing throughout the school and standards in science at Key Stage 2.
- Work provided by teachers is not always matched closely to the particular needs of their pupils.
- The school development plan does not contain sufficient information on costs and how the success of planned developments is to be measured.
- Levels of attendance.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in June 1999 when it was found to have serious weaknesses. These weaknesses have been addressed effectively and the school has made good progress. Although standards in the national tests at the age of eleven were well below average last year, the teaching in Key Stage 2 has been disrupted significantly due to staff absence. This problem, along with other related factors, does not now exist and standards are improving. There were four key issues in the last inspection report, the first of which concerned the leadership and management of the school. This has been addressed well in that the governing body has been strengthened very effectively and has a good strategic view of the school's development. The co-ordinators have worked very hard in the last two years and now play a full part in the monitoring and raising of standards in their subjects. The second key issue concerned the need to improve the behaviour of the pupils. A number of good procedures have been put in place and the standard of behaviour is now good. The quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, was criticised. Although some areas for development still exist, the general standard

has risen significantly. The final key issue concerned the unsatisfactory standards in information and communication technology; these are now satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	E	E	E
Mathematics	A	E	E	E
Science	C	E*	E	E

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

The above table shows well below average standards in all three subjects in the national tests last year. The results in science in 1999 were in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally. These results should be looked at in the light of the very disrupted teaching that these pupils received during their later years in the school. Evidence from the inspection is that standards in mathematics are now average and in English and science are just below average by the age of eleven. Results at the age of seven have been improving over the years and were average in reading, above average in mathematics but well below average in writing in the national tests last year. Children enter the school with below average levels of attainment and make good progress in the Foundation Stage to reach average levels of attainment overall by the time they reach statutory school age. The school has set challenging targets for improvement and these targets were missed by some way last year. However, the school is on track to attain the targets for this year. Statistics show that the pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress overall during their time in the school. The pupils generally achieve well, particularly in science at Key Stage 1 where standards are above average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have good attitudes to their work and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in and around the school. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are developing very well into responsible young citizens. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In nearly half of the lessons seen the teaching was good and in a further one in four the quality was very good or better. One excellent lesson was seen and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of English is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The pupils generally learn the skills of literacy well. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and leads to appropriate learning of the skills of numeracy. However, many numeracy sessions are too long and the pace of the lessons is not quick enough to enable the pupils to learn well.

The teachers generally try hard to meet the needs of all the pupils in their classes, but they are not always providing appropriately challenging work for all pupils. The teachers set high standards of behaviour and manage their classes well. This creates a calm working environment in which it is easy for the pupils to learn. The pupils react well to this and generally work hard.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of curriculum opportunities for the pupils. Visitors into school and visits to places of interest enhance this provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified early and they are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision is made for those pupils who have English as an additional language. They are quickly integrated into their classes and are enabled to take a full part in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made for pupils' personal development. This provision is better for their moral and social development than for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school ensures that the pupils are safe and well cared for. Effective systems of assessment have been introduced but these have not been in place long enough to be useful in the teachers' planning for individual pupils' progress.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents generally have positive views of the school. The teachers work hard and successfully to involve parents in the education of their children.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management in the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has put in place a number of initiatives and his deputy has made a significant impact in carrying these through. Subject co-ordinators work hard and have significant responsibility for raising standards in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good strategic view of the school and fulfil their responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is improving its ability to evaluate its own performance and is now doing this satisfactorily. The school development plan is improved since the last inspection but does not contain costs or measures to evaluate the success of all planned action.
The strategic use of resources	The school is well staffed and the accommodation is good. Learning resources are satisfactory except for design and technology. The school uses all resources available to it well and applies the principles of best value effectively.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of their children.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school working more closely with parents.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

The above views are based on a fairly small return of parental questionnaires (18 per cent) and the views expressed by the small number of parents who attended the parents' meeting. Parents interviewed during the inspection were positive in their views of the school. The inspectors endorse all positive parental views. The leadership and management of the school have improved and are now satisfactory. The judgement of the inspection is that there is a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons. The inspection also judges that parents receive good information about their children's progress and that the teachers work hard to involve parents in the education of their children.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Evidence from the inspection is that the standards achieved in English and science are just below average by the time the pupils leave the school. In mathematics, attainment is average by this age. The pupils' attainment in the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds was well below the national average in all three subjects. When compared with schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, attainment in these tests was also well below average in all three subjects. The education of these children was significantly disrupted by staff absence, a factor that has not affected the present Year 6 nearly as much. Although it is not easy to identify trends, due to the comparatively small numbers in the year groups, taking the three subjects together, standards have been falling compared with national figures over recent years. Once again, the problem with staffing is the major factor in this decline. This problem now no longer exists and standards are rising. Realistic but challenging targets have been set for improvement but these targets were missed by some way last year. The school is on track to meet the targets for this year.
2. Inspection findings are that by the age of eleven, standards are average in all other subjects. The pupils' progress across the range of subjects is satisfactory in this key stage.
3. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are average for the pupils aged eleven. The emphasis on good expression helps the pupils' development in this aspect. Standards of reading are average at age eleven. Reading at home and the contribution of parents have a positive influence on the learning of pupils. Attainment in writing is below average at this age and is the weakest of the aspects of English. There is a clear acceleration of progress in writing towards the end of the key stage, helped by the planning of writing and providing opportunities to write for various purposes. The organisation of groups, with work not always planned to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, restricts progress, particularly lower down the key stage. Overall the pupils make good progress in English in this key stage and are developing their skills of literacy well.
4. In mathematics at Key Stage 2, pupils are reaching average standards in numeracy. Many are able to work out the answers to quite complicated calculations accurately. Their ability to apply this knowledge to problems is below average, as they are not given sufficient opportunities to explore strategies that are available to solve problems during mental sessions. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure is average at this age, as is their knowledge of data handling. For example, they draw and measure angles to the nearest degree, and data handling is well supported by work in information and communication technology. The inspection evidence indicates that pupils are making satisfactory progress in mathematics at this key stage.
5. Standards in science at Key Stage 2 are below average. The pupils' attainment in all aspects of science is below average. Although much of the work is presented in an investigative form, there are insufficient occasions when the work is correctly matched to the abilities of the pupils. The pupils' knowledge of life processes and living things is below average, although they have sufficient knowledge of food chains and what plants need to survive. They know that materials can be mixed and separated and also know that some will dissolve and some will not. The pupils complete simple electrical circuits and demonstrate their knowledge of other aspects of physical processes such as magnetism. Despite some shortcomings, the majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress in science at this key stage.
6. Evidence from the inspection is that by the time the pupils are seven, the standards achieved in English are below average, in mathematics they are average, and in science they are above average. The pupils' attainment in the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds was average in

reading, well below average in writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, attainment in reading and mathematics was well above average, but in writing it was below average. Standards in the national tests have been variable, but there is a discernible trend upwards, except in writing where standards in 2000 were below those in any of the previous four years.

7. Inspection evidence is that by the age of seven, standards are average in all other subjects. Overall, the pupils' attainment across the range of subjects by the end of Key Stage 1 is average. The pupils' progress across the range of subjects is satisfactory in this key stage.
8. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are average for pupils aged seven. They are encouraged to participate and ask questions during English lessons and this helps their progress. Standards of reading are average at age seven. The pupils at this age have satisfactory skills of word building. Standards of writing are below average at this age. The pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their writing at this age and some more able pupils are not being given sufficiently challenging tasks. The pupils make satisfactory progress in English at Key Stage 1.
9. In mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are reaching average standards in numeracy. Many count accurately beyond 100 and understand the significance of large numbers, but not so many recall their addition and subtraction facts to 20. Their ability to apply this knowledge to problems is below average, as the teachers do not ask the pupils often enough to explain how they obtain a particular answer. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure is average at this age. The pupils are making satisfactory progress in mathematics at Key Stage 1.
10. Standards in all aspects of science at the age of seven are above average. They are gaining good understanding, due to much of the curriculum being presented in an experimental and investigative way. They are therefore above average in their ability to devise experiments. They are also learning well in other aspects of science due to this approach. For example, their knowledge of materials is enhanced with an experiment to test textiles for their waterproofing capabilities. The pupils at Key Stage 1 are making good progress overall in science.
11. The baseline assessment tests carried out by the school show that the pupils entering the Nursery have below average ability overall and by the time they reach statutory school age they have average attainment. The children make good progress overall in the Nursery and Reception class. By the time they are five they have above average attainment in their personal, social and emotional development, below average attainment in communications, language and literacy and average attainment in all other areas of learning.
12. The children in the Nursery and Reception class listen attentively. Speaking skills are well developed, and the teachers work hard to ensure that the children have a good variety of structured opportunities provided to practise these skills. In mathematics, the children have a growing understanding of the concept of number. Most count confidently to ten, and some beyond. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is a strength of the Nursery and Reception class. The children have settled well into school life. They are prepared to work with other children and take turns and share. They are confident and seek help from adults when required. The children concentrate well on work provided and understand right and wrong.
13. The children in the Nursery and Reception class have average knowledge and understanding of the world, a strength here being the opportunities provided for the children to use information and communication technology. The children's physical skills are appropriately developed and these skills are well planned for, particularly in the Nursery. The children's creative skills are average.
14. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and achieve appropriately. Individual education plans are good and have achievable short-term targets. They are written by the class teacher, with appropriate support from the special educational needs co-

ordinator and the Warrington Educational Support Team teacher. The pupils' individual education plans are taken into account when teachers plan the work for their class. These factors have a positive impact on the achievement of the pupils with special needs.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. The pupils have good attitudes to their work and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They are keen to come to school and they enjoy their lessons. Indeed, a group of pupils, in conversation with an inspector, found it difficult to choose a favourite subject because they like so many of them. A number of Year 6 pupils also commented on what fun their lessons are. The pupils listen carefully and they concentrate and persevere even when they find the work difficult. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, a pupil commented that there were some 'hard words' in the text being studied but all the pupils concentrated throughout and contributed enthusiastically to the lesson. Nevertheless, a few pupils do not always find it easy to sustain concentration and the fact that they usually remain focussed is often due to the skilful methods which teachers use.
16. The pupils' behaviour in lessons around the school and in the playground is never less than satisfactory; it is usually good and parents are pleased with this aspect of the school. This is a much better picture to that seen at the time of the last inspection and there have been no exclusions in recent years. The pupils move around in a quiet and orderly manner and they follow established routines well. For example, when Key Stage 2 pupils gather in the hall for assembly, they hardly make a sound. The pupils play well together and form very good relationships with each other and with teachers and other adults in the school. A very effective example of these very good relationships was seen one playtime when a new boy was feeling lonely. When the teacher on duty asked who would look after and play with him, there were many sincere invitations from other pupils for him to join in their games. Many of the older pupils are keen to help the younger pupils and are often seen looking after them at play times and in the dining room. Most of the Year 6 pupils give up their break time once a week to spend time with younger pupils to share books with them and to hear them read. The pupils' own personal development is also very good. They take turns and share equipment very well without any grumbling when it is not their turn, for example, on the computer, or to use the play equipment at break times. They grow into sensible and polite young people and they use their initiative well.
17. Even though the pupils are keen to come to school, they easily contract minor infections and illnesses, which prevent them from attending school. In addition, there are a large number of family holidays taken in term time for either one or two weeks, often towards the end of the Summer term. The combination of these two types of absence significantly affects the school's overall attendance figure, which remains well below the national average. At the time of the last inspection, punctuality at the start of the school day was also criticised. However, this has improved and is continuing to do so.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

18. The quality of teaching is good overall. Nearly half of all lessons observed were good and a further one lesson in four was very good or better. One lesson was excellent. All remaining lessons observed were satisfactory. This good teaching results in the pupils' good levels of learning. This is beginning to result in the good progress made by the pupils over time. The teaching for the children in the Foundation Stage is always good or better and is very good overall. The teaching for the pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good, although it is better in Key Stage 2 than it is in Key Stage 1. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when improving the quality of teaching was a key issue. The high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching observed at the last inspection has been eliminated and the proportion of good and better teaching has also been raised significantly.
19. The teaching of literacy is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The major reason why the teaching of English is not as good as the general quality of teaching is that there are too many occasions when pupils are not given appropriate work for their abilities. This is

holding back learning, particularly for the more able pupils. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. It is not good, principally because the time allowed for numeracy lessons is more than that recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy that the school is using for planning. This means that the teachers have too little material for the available time and the lessons proceed at a rather leisurely pace.

20. Throughout the school the teachers have good subject knowledge, use a good range of methods and provide interesting work, which retains the enthusiasm of the pupils. This is particularly so in the Nursery and Reception class, where the teachers provide the full range of educational experiences for these young children. Opportunities are rarely missed to reinforce learning in these classes. For example, outside play for the children in the Nursery provided many opportunities for the teacher and her very competent assistants to encourage the children to talk and ask questions. Many interesting creatures and other discoveries were made while the children were preparing a bed to plant flowers and vegetables. In an excellent lesson seen in the Reception class, the children's language skills were very well developed as the teacher and the Nursery nurse created a make-believe planet, complete with alien. The children were so involved that they almost turned fiction into reality.
21. A particular strength in the teaching is that the teachers generally manage their classes well and create a good learning environment in which concentration is easy for the pupils. Most of the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. Good order is ensured and the pupils are often expected to organise themselves, so encouraging independence. The pupils react well to this atmosphere, and their concentration is usually well sustained. This is sometimes not the case, as, for example, in some mathematics lessons, when the introduction of a lesson is too long, the lesson loses pace and the pupils begin to lose interest. The teachers use homework well in support of what they are doing in class. This has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
22. Within this positive picture, there are areas for development. Although the teachers' planning is good overall, in a number of lessons the objective for learning is not sufficiently precise for the teachers and the pupils to be able to measure the success of the lesson. This results in the teachers being unable to plan as effectively as they might for the next stage of learning for individuals or groups of pupils. A further result is that the pupils do not always have work that is appropriate for their needs. For example, in too many English and mathematics lessons the work provided for the different groups is too similar, which puts a limit on the levels of knowledge and understanding, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.
23. The pupils with special needs learn effectively as they work towards the targets specified in their individual education plans. Classroom assistants often give them valuable extra support. The teacher from the Warrington Educational Support Team acts in an advisory role to the school. She assesses pupils' special needs and is a member of the local authority statement board. She also teaches pupils who are on Stage 3 of the Code of Practice for half a day each week. The pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support from a member of the local authority Language Support Team, which is based at Evelyn Street Primary School.

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

24. The school provides a good range of valuable and worthwhile opportunities for the pupils. The rich curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced, meets the needs of all the pupils and promotes the school's policy and practice of total inclusion, so that all pupils in the school have equality of access. Each subject is allocated an appropriate amount of teaching time with a due emphasis on the core subjects of English and mathematics. In most subjects, the pupils have the opportunity to develop their information and communication technology skills.
25. The school quite rightly places an emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Careful and thorough implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has played a big part in the now improving standards of reading and English. Likewise, the introduction of the National Numeracy

Strategy has improved pupils' ability to manipulate numbers mentally and given them effective strategies to solve mathematical problems and ensure that they experience a wide range of topics. This has resulted in improving standards in mathematics.

26. All subjects have good quality policies, schemes of work and follow the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The previous inspection report stated that the planning for design and technology was unsatisfactory but this is not now the case because the planning is underpinned by a comprehensive scheme of work. Planning is carried out as a team in both key stages and, as the whole staff meets regularly, there is opportunity to liaise between all the teachers. All subjects have overall plans prepared by the co-ordinators, so that when preparing termly plans the teachers know what to teach, and when. The headteacher, the deputy and the co-ordinators monitor this good quality planning. The results of this planning are monitored by the head and the deputy in the classroom and also by the co-ordinators who regularly examine the work completed by the pupils. Discussions with pupils also provide information about the effectiveness of the planning.
27. Short-term planning usually has clear objectives so that the teachers are able to measure progress in the lesson. An extra classroom assistant is employed for part of the year so that booster classes can be organised to help pupils to improve their performance in the national assessment tests. There is a beneficial policy for homework. All pupils have reading diaries and take their reading books home. The older pupils are given English and mathematics homework each week. Most parents agree that the pupils are given sufficient homework. The scheme of work for information and communication technology is comprehensive and the subject is developing. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
28. Pupils with special educational needs, including those for whom English is an additional language, have access to the full curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The school promotes inclusive education so that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and to all the activities provided by the school. The pupils have good support from the teachers, who ensure that pupils are gaining confidence and language skills to enable them to integrate as fully as possible into the school environment.
29. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. There is a good policy for this aspect which has been put into practice. The school provides appropriate opportunities in the science curriculum to discuss healthy living, the dangers associated with drugs, smoking and alcohol. The school health visitor is involved in the sex education programme. Parents are contacted and can discuss the programme in case they do not think it is suitable for their children. The school promotes healthy eating and in one class, for example, the pupils were involved in a design and technology topic concerned with healthy sandwiches.
30. The provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory, considering the limited number of staff in the school. These include cycling proficiency, Times-table Club and the computer club which is held at the local High School. Sporting activities include netball, football, cross-country running and cricket and each year the pupils also go ice-skating.
31. The curriculum is also enhanced by music tuition for the guitar and the keyboard. There is a charge for this but no pupil is excluded on grounds of cost. A number of visitors come into school each year, including one who talks about birds. He brings with him owls and hawks to demonstrate flight. Educational visits also extend the curriculum and widen the pupils' experiences. For example, pupils have been to Eureka, the Ellesmere Port Canal Boat Museum and the Catalyst Museum at Runcorn. The pupils also go on investigative walks along the Sankey Valley.
32. The school has established good links with the local community and partner institutions and pupils are benefiting from these links and joint efforts. For example, a number of Year 10 students from St Gregory's High School provide valuable help in lessons throughout the school on a regular basis. The pupils in Year 6 are currently attending an after-school computer club at

Penketh High School and pupils in years 5 and 6 have attended a science lecture there earlier this year. Two members of teachers' own families also give generously of their time in coming into school to help in classrooms and with specific projects. Another very valuable link which benefits the pupils' personal development is that which the school has with the Hope Hall Brethren, whose representative visits regularly to lead assemblies and preach the principles of Christianity.

33. The curriculum is enriched by good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported as satisfactory.
34. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The pupils take part in a collective act of worship each day which often has a moral theme, for example, being caring to other pupils and people in the school. The pupils enjoy the hymn singing which is of good quality and contributes to the atmosphere of the occasion. The pupils also say Grace before meals in the dining room before lunch. Visitors regularly come to the assembly and this adds another dimension to the occasion. Pupils also visit local churches. The youngest pupils went to Winwick Church and the vicar explained what the various artefacts are used for. The pupils also go to Holy Trinity Church for the Harvest Festival and to sing carols at Christmas. The pupils also experience awe and wonder when they investigate life processes in science, for example, growing beans and sunflower seeds or watching mini-beasts like worms in the school environment.
35. The provision for moral development is good. This is promoted through all areas of the curriculum and the pupils have a clear understanding of what is acceptable behaviour in the school and the difference between right and wrong. In school assemblies, moral themes are reflected upon, for example, helping other people. The pupils in the school, with the co-operation of their teachers, have devised rules for the smooth running of the school and for the benefit of all pupils and people in it. Moral themes and stories are also included in the religious education lessons, for example, the Prodigal Son. The school has an effective policy to combat bullying and discussions with the pupils indicate that this type of behaviour is rare, although pupils know what to do if an unpleasant incident arises. The pupils are aware of the less fortunate people in the world and willingly support charitable collections for causes such as Red Nose Day, Children in Need and the Royal Institute for the Blind.
36. The provision for social development is good. All staff promote and expect good manners and because they have warm relationships with the pupils they act as good role models. In the dining room, the pupils have correct table manners and chat amicably with each other. On the playground, boys and girls play well together in mixed groups. There is no rough play and no one is isolated. In discussion with the pupils, they can explain how some people damage the environment by, for example, using too many cars or polluting rivers with rubbish. They know how the environment can be safeguarded by, perhaps, recycling waste paper. The pupils take care of the school and there is no graffiti or litter on the playground. Because the pupils have effective social training, they look after school books and expensive equipment like computers with care. The older pupils are allocated small but important tasks to do in school in order to raise their self esteem and give them a feeling of social responsibility. For example in the dining room, the older pupils sit with the younger ones to help them with their meals and act as role models so that they will behave properly. They help in the younger classes with shared reading and supervise the school doors, corridors and stairs at break times.
37. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Besides studying their own Christian heritage in religious education, the pupils also learn about other world religions like Judaism and Islam. To emphasise their own heritage the Lady Mayor visited the school and chatted to everyone. The pupils also went on an educational visit to London to see the Millennium Dome which the pupils thought was fascinating. A group of missionaries from Africa came to the school to talk about their experiences in that culture. The older pupils are going to the Peace Centre in the near future to take part in a workshop organised by an African dance group, in order to give the pupils a taste of the rich and colourful African culture. Through art the pupils become familiar with famous artists like Lowry and Van Gogh. Usually the pupils listen to both classical and modern music during the daily assembly. Each year the pupils enjoy live theatre when they

go to the pantomime at Parr Hall and the Action Transport Theatre visits the school each year. Musicians come to school to play stringed and brass instruments to give the pupils experience of live music. During the week of the inspection, the school music room contained several good displays relating to Islam, Chinese culture, Yemen, Sri Lanka and India. These displays support the learning and understanding of all pupils about the diversity of the society in which they live.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

38. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
39. The headteacher, staff and governors are successful in providing a school where pupils can feel safe and secure. The school caretaker works hard to ensure the building and grounds are kept spotlessly clean and free from any hazards. Health and safety inspections are carried out regularly and any concerns are quickly remedied. The school carries out its responsibility to protect children from all forms of abuse well. Staff have had training in this field and together with the deputy headteacher, who has overall responsibility for child protection, have a clear understanding of their duty. The pupils are well supervised and they receive good and knowledgeable care should they become ill or injured at school. For example, during the inspection, a pupil fell in the playground and banged her arm. A member of staff, who is well-qualified in first aid, attended to her and carried out a thorough examination to establish that there was no serious damage. Of particular note was how sensitively and caringly this treatment was administered and how effectively the pupil was reassured to reduce her anxiety. An older pupil who suffered a nose bleed in assembly received equally sensitive and reassuring treatment from another teacher. Despite this good care, and even though teachers do consider the health and safety of pupils on visits out of school, there is currently no formal system to ensure without doubt that sufficient checks are carried out before pupils are taken on visits off the school premises.
40. Staff put a lot of effort into building very good relationships with the pupils. They take an interest in them and listen patiently to what they have to say. As a result, pupils feel secure and comfortable in coming to school. They feel confident to ask and answer questions in lessons and to 'have a go' without fear of humiliation should they get it wrong. The teachers provide pupils with opportunities to work with different groups of pupils and to become independent in selecting the right equipment for lessons. The school is currently working hard to improve pupils' attendance by working closely with the Education Welfare Officer and with the incentive of a reward system. However, although there has been an improvement in the unauthorised absence, there is little improvement so far in attendance overall. The new incentive scheme has had insufficient thought and is not a totally fair and effective system. Staff have undertaken training and there is now a consistent approach to managing behaviour throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are clear and sensible rules to follow and gentle reminders from staff when necessary. Hence, pupils know what is expected of them and in general they meet those expectations. Bullying is rare, but when it does occur, pupils know to tell a teacher and they confirm that something is always done to stop it. During the inspection there was no evidence of harassment or intimidation of any kind.
41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are generally effective, but are not listed in an up-to-date, whole-school written assessment policy. Statutory and non-statutory tests are set at various times during the year. The results are analysed and used effectively to track and monitor the pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy throughout the school. The school has recently introduced targets for improvements for each pupil in English and mathematics. However, many targets are too general and not sufficiently specific to allow accurate measurement of pupils' progress.
42. From an early stage, the school collects useful information from various assessment activities. This is made available to teachers to help them plan future work. However, the information is not always used effectively to plan learning activities, which are graded appropriately to challenge

pupils at different levels of attainment. This is often apparent in group activities during literacy and numeracy lessons.

43. The monitoring and supporting of pupils' academic progress are carried out effectively in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress in other subjects are less consistent and have had insufficient attention as the school implements new National Curriculum requirements, introduced in September 2000.
44. The school special needs policy clearly states the identification criteria by which pupils with special educational needs are identified. This policy is based firmly on the *Code of Practice* for special educational needs and is readily available for parents, and others, to consult. Pupils' special needs are identified initially by the class teacher and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The school also has the benefit of regular visits by the local authority educational psychologist, whose role is both to advise staff and to assess pupils. Parents are always informed about any concerns and are invited to discuss these with the appropriate staff. The school prospectus gives all parents brief and basic information about the school's special needs policy. The school accommodation allows appropriate wheelchair access to the school Nursery and, hence, to the ground floor teaching accommodation. There is no access for the physically disabled to the first floor. However, there are currently no pupils with physical disability in the school.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

45. There is a good partnership between school and parents in helping pupils to learn and this has improved since the last inspection. Even though a small number of parents expressed concerns to inspectors prior to the inspection, the vast majority of parents are pleased with what the school does. During the inspection, parents delivering their children to school spoke highly of the school and would happily recommend it to others. They particularly praise the quality of teaching and feel that teachers work very hard here.
46. Parents are kept well informed of the general life and events of the school through a weekly newsletter. Coffee afternoons are held twice each term and are used well as teachers give talks to parents on curriculum matters such as literacy and numeracy. Parents are equally well informed of what is being taught in lessons through the Homelink' sheet. This is sent out at the beginning of each term and sets out much of the work to be covered in every subject for the term ahead. Information on pupils' progress is also readily available for parents. In addition to the twice yearly parents' evenings (plus a third one in March for pupils in Years 3 and 6), and the availability of staff on a daily basis, the parents of pupils in Key Stage 1 are given a written review of how well they have done in achieving their individual targets each term. Parents are also kept well informed of homework tasks. They can clearly see from their children's homework diaries, homework books and home/school reading records what is expected and when, and they can also see how well they have done from the teachers' markings and comments. The quality of the end of year individual pupils' progress reports is usually good. They nearly always give examples in every subject of what the child has learnt and can now do. However, in one Key Stage 1 class these reports are unsatisfactory because in many subjects they talk about what has been covered in lessons and not what has actually been achieved by the individual pupil.
47. Many parents take an interest in their children's work and regularly spend time with them, hearing them read at home and helping them with other homework tasks. A few parents help in school, particularly in the Nursery and Reception class, as well as on visits out of school. Whenever the school asks for extra help from parents, they respond willingly. For example, a parent spent considerable time putting up lighting for a school production and parents often send items into school to support specific projects such as 'Britain since the 1930s' and 'Our Town'. There is also good support from parents for the school's fund-raising events which raise around three thousand pounds each year to provide extra equipment, which has included the school stage.

48. Parents are always involved when a pupil is placed on the school's register of special needs. They are invited to review meetings and have a chance to comment on the individual education plans for their child. However, although some parents agree to support their child at home by giving extra help, this sometimes lasts only for a very short time and so does not really have much impact on the child's progress.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

49. The quality of leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when this was one of the serious weaknesses noted. The headteacher has taken seriously the weaknesses found and has put in place a number of action plans with considerable support from the education authority advisers. The deputy headteacher, who has been instrumental in putting these plans into action, ably supports him. One of the specific criticisms in the previous inspection was the role of the subject co-ordinators. They now have clear job descriptions and good responsibility for standards in their subjects. They have worked hard and there is shared commitment to raising standards.
50. The governors provide a good level of support. This again represents good improvement since the last inspection when their role was limited. In particular, they now have a good strategic view of the direction of the school. They work effectively with the headteacher and staff and play a satisfactory role in shaping the future direction and work of the school. They have a good understanding of its strengths and its weaknesses. The governors are very supportive of the school, but their more formal role in the evaluation and analysis of data is less developed. However, they receive regular reports from the headteacher, although these reports tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative. Governors have begun to question and discuss appropriately aspects of the provision that the school makes. They meet their statutory responsibilities well and there has been a good turn-out of governors to training events in the last couple of terms, which demonstrates their commitment to improve.
51. The special educational needs co-ordinator works effectively to ensure that the school policy on special needs is carried out efficiently. She has revised the policy to ensure that it is in line with the *Code of Practice*. There is a governor with responsibility for special needs who plans to review the current school policy to meet the needs of the new *Code of Practice*, when this becomes a statutory requirement.
52. The school's evaluation of its performance is improving and is now satisfactory. It has begun to assess the effectiveness of its teaching through monitoring by headteacher, subject co-ordinators and governors. This has begun to have an effect in raising standards, but some of the reports of these monitoring visits tend to be overly positive and do not point out areas for development sufficiently. All staff have been observed teaching literacy and numeracy. These observations and discussions with teachers have been effective because they have led to a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. There is more to be done to monitor the quality of learning and to identify subject areas for further development.
53. The school development plan is improved since the last inspection when it had serious limitations. It now takes a longer-term view and has considerable detail about items for development. However, several of the items for action are not costed, nor do they have indications of how their effectiveness is to be measured. The exception here is items within the plan which are to be funded by special grants. These items are very thoroughly costed and these specific grants are very carefully identified and used for their correct purpose. The chair of the governing body, who is also chair of the finance committee, has particular expertise in budgeting and is particularly effective in making the best use of the available finance.
54. The school has a good number of teachers and support staff to support learning throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage, all the staff in both the Nursery and the Reception class work very well together as a very competent team. This is one of the main reasons that the children do so well when they start school. Throughout the school, the teachers and support staff are well deployed in the classrooms and curriculum co-ordinators support and guide their colleagues

so that the teachers' skills are improving all the time. Support staff have an important role in helping pupils to learn effectively and improve their attainment. Administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors and the caretaker are all part of the team, making valuable contributions to the life of the school.

55. All staff are suitably trained and they take part in continuing professional development. This has helped to raise the quality of teaching overall, as well as creating the successful teamwork that underpins the teaching in each phase. The induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers and new members of staff are good.
56. The spacious accommodation within the school is good and has a positive impact on the curriculum. The school has worked hard to provide a bright, spotlessly clean and very stimulating learning environment for the pupils. All the available space is well utilised and includes two large halls used for physical education, music, assemblies and some subject lessons. Most classrooms are spacious and used well to support the pupils' learning, especially the Nursery and Reception classrooms. The school library helps learning to be successful and indoor and outdoor areas are very well cared for and maintained. Resources are effectively managed, are well organised and carefully looked after. The overall provision of books, equipment and other learning resources is satisfactory. However there is a shortage of apparatus for gymnastics for Key Stage 1 and basic equipment such as saws in design and technology.
57. The school has established good financial procedures that are based upon the principle of best value. Taking into account all relevant factors, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) raise standards in writing throughout the school and standards in science at Key Stage 2 by:
  - a) setting individual targets in writing which are achievable and measurable; (paragraphs 41, 82)
  - b) setting tasks, during group work in literacy lessons, which are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils at different levels of attainment; (paragraphs 3, 8, 19, 42, 76, 81)
  - c) providing differentiated work in science at Key Stage 2, particularly for the less able pupils; (paragraphs 5, 96)
- (2) continue to develop the systems of assessment for all subjects so that:
  - a) they provide accurate measures of pupils attainment; (paragraph 41)
  - b) these attainments can be used to set precise targets for each pupil's progress in the short term; (paragraphs 22, 41, 82, 93)
  - c) the teachers can ensure that work at an appropriate and challenging level is set for each pupil in their class; (paragraphs 3, 8, 19, 22, 42, 76, 81, 92)
  - d) the school has an up to date written policy for assessment and recording which lists and explains all procedures clearly; (paragraph 41)
- (3) improve the school development plan so that all specific objectives for development have:
  - a) clear indication of how much they will cost; (paragraph 53)
  - b) measures to enable the school to evaluate how successful their action has been; (paragraph 53)
- (4) put in place further measures to improve levels of attendance. (paragraphs 17, 40)

In addition to the above weaknesses, the governors should consider the following items for inclusion in their action plan:

- (1) increase the use of the ICT suite; (paragraph 129)
- (2) put in place formal systems to identify and address potential hazards on out of school educational visits and ensure that proper checks are carried out prior to these trips; (paragraph 39)
- (3) update the policies that are outdated. (paragraph 41, 129)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	25	48	25	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	156
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	13	9	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	18	17	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (85)	77 (89)	100 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	18	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (89)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	8	21	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	17	14	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (47)	48 (53)	69 (43)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	15	18	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (57)	62 (53)	55 (50)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Separate figures are not given for boys and girls at either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 as there were fewer than ten girls at Key Stage 1 and fewer than ten boys at Key Stage 2. These low numbers make the statistics unreliable.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	132
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	22.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	409,258
Total expenditure	413,042
Expenditure per pupil	1,967
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,653
Balance carried forward to next year	12,869

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	38

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	42	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	65	3	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	53	16	0	0
The teaching is good.	42	53	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	54	19	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	37	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	47	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	16	59	22	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	22	43	19	5	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	61	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	31	25	0	33

*Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding*

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

59. This area is a strength of the school. Children under five have a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception class. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Teaching is very good in both classes, and the curriculum is well planned and based firmly in the suggested curriculum for the age group. Children join the Nursery on a part-time basis when they are three years old and when they start their attainment is below average. Most transfer into the Reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. The planning and organisation of the Foundation Stage, as well as the high quality teaching, has a positive impact on raising standards in all the areas of learning.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in all areas of learning and has improved since the previous inspection. This has a very positive impact and ensures that the children make good progress in all areas of learning. The adults working in the Nursery and Reception class work closely as a team. The co-ordinator has a very good overview of the whole Foundation Stage. Teamwork is strong and the team is very well led and this is one of the main reasons that children do so well. The teachers and nursery nurses have a secure understanding of the ways in which very young children learn and they have high expectations of them. The work for the under fives is planned very carefully and it is based on very good day-to-day assessments of what the children know, understand and can do. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and opportunities for the children to choose for themselves. Very good use is made of time and resources. The children are well prepared to start the National Curriculum by the age of five.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

61. Children enter the school with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the Reception class, most are exceeding the early learning goals in this area. This shows very good progress and reflects the very good teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes where children are always encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The teacher and adults' relationships with the children and care of them are very good. Children know the importance of classroom routines such as sitting quietly and listening to their teacher, lining up and taking turns to give out drinks and snacks. They gain quickly in confidence and know which group and area of the large classroom they belong to in the Nursery or which group they are in, in Reception. Children quickly learn to work and to have respect for each other when working together. All staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour; children respond well, learn to know what is right and wrong very quickly and why they should behave in this way. They rapidly become independent, concentrate and persevere in their learning and ask for help when required. In Reception, the children discuss things that we do to keep us happy as well as understand the very simple rules for the class. The children in both classes line up quietly and walk quietly through school. Children share resources such as paintbrushes, crayons and dressing up clothes sensibly, and they are independent when putting on aprons and fastening their coats.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

62. When children start in the Nursery they have limited skills of speaking and listening. Teaching is very good in both the Nursery and Reception class, and the children make good progress. By the time they move into the Reception class their skills have improved but they are still below average. By the age of five, a few children still have not reached the expected standard for their age. All the children develop their use of language successfully, including those with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home. A significant number have a limited vocabulary and initially they find it difficult to speak in complete sentences in both the Nursery and Reception class. This is overcome successfully. Speaking and listening through

structured role-play is well developed in the attractive, well-structured 'Travel Agents' in the Nursery. Excellent use is made of drama to develop children's speaking and listening skills in Reception. A fine example of this occurred during the inspection as they met an alien from Outer Space and taught her to speak English. Books are prominent in both classrooms and books and pictures are enjoyed. The children handle books correctly. In Reception higher attaining children can read a simple text fluently, while other children learn the sounds and shapes of letters and practise forming them correctly. They can write their name correctly without help and they record their experiences through drawing and writing.

### **Mathematical development**

63. When children enter the Nursery their attainment in mathematics is below that of children of a similar age. Provision for the development of mathematical language and the teaching is very good, which helps children learn and make good progress. Mathematical skills develop well as children learn to match, count, sort and handle objects. By the time they start in Reception their attainment is still below average. The children's rate of progress is maintained and they reach average standards by the time they are five. The children in Reception are keen and enthusiastic about their work. The higher attainers can add numbers to ten accurately. Many of them can sort objects by their shape, can count aloud to ten and beyond and create a repeating number or shape pattern. Many children are familiar with number rhymes and games and talking about mathematics has a high priority. Every opportunity is taken to count and use numbers in the day-to-day activities in both classes. Sand and water play are enjoyed and the children become adept at using the correct vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than' as part of their activity.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

64. The teaching and learning are very good in this area. The children in the Nursery are curious and want to know more about their world. Their class topic on transport helps them to learn about different methods of transport. They count wheels on cars and lorries and successfully make a wide range of vehicles with their constructional equipment. In scientific activities they explore how images change by looking in different mirrors. They are competent at using the computer, moving the cursor around the screen and making their own designs. The children use simple computer programs with confidence, and some reach high standards, exceeding those for the age group. By the time they are five, they reach the expected level for children of similar ages and the good progress is maintained. In science activities, the high attaining children in Reception can sort and classify magnetic and non-magnetic objects. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is developed through talking about past events such as what they did at the weekend or on their birthday. They can make very good models of their town using scissors, glue and paint.

### **Physical development**

65. Children of all abilities make good progress and by the time they reach their fifth birthday many of them reach the expected standard for the age group. Teaching is very good for all of the three to five year olds. In physical activities the children in the Nursery can run and jump with confidence. They enjoy riding their bikes and trikes and climbing. As they progress in the Reception class they develop an awareness of space and others around them. They have growing control of their body movements and their co-ordination improves all the time. Adults intervene appropriately to help the children develop their skills successfully. Their manipulative skills are developing well and they confidently construct toys, paint, write, colour and draw. The children handle scissors, glue, paintbrushes and pencils successfully. They use their newly developing skills to good effect.

### **Creative development**

66. This area of learning is well taught and most children have achieved the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children enter school with limited brush control skills, however they make good progress and the pictures on display in their own 'Gallery', show a growing

maturity when using paint. The staff provide children with a rich environment for creative development and the attractive displays reflect the broader range of their work. They experiment with colour and a variety of materials to add texture to collage. They have had the opportunity to sing Nursery rhymes, joining in enthusiastically and responding to actions. In Reception they are beginning to appreciate loud, quiet, fast and slow music. They have the opportunity to create their own models from junk materials and do this well. The more able children are able to explain what they have created and why they have made this particular object.

## ENGLISH

67. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the age of eleven, the pupils' performance was well below that of pupils in all and similar schools. National test results for the four years up to 2000 indicate a rate of improvement in English which was well below that found nationally. During the same period, the boys' performance in the subject was significantly better than that of the girls compared to national figures for boys and girls. However, taking into account the national picture of girls outperforming boys, the school has narrowed this gap so there is little difference between the actual performance of girls and boys in the school.
68. Inspection findings for the pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 indicate a better picture than the school's most recent national test results. Overall standards are moving closer to those found nationally, although they remain below average. Close examination reveals that standards in speaking and listening and reading are broadly in line with the average, but standards in writing fall short of those found nationally. The school has addressed the variation in the performance of pupils in terms of gender in recent years and is monitoring appropriately to ensure that no group suffers any disadvantage. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is helping the pupils at all levels of attainment to make good progress during lessons. The governors set appropriate targets in literacy for the end of Key Stage 2 and the school is on course to achieve those set for 2001.
69. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils aged seven in reading was in line with the national average, but well above the performance of pupils in similar schools. Their performance in writing was well below that found nationally and below the average for similar schools.
70. The inspection findings for Key Stage 1 are consistent with the most recent national test results. They indicate that pupils reach standards which are at least appropriate for their age in reading and speaking and listening, but are below average in writing. The majority of the pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of English, but a significant number of higher ability pupils are capable of making better progress in writing.
71. Throughout the school, the good provision made for pupils with special educational needs helps them to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The pupils for whom English is an additional language are also supported effectively and make consistently good progress in extending their language skills.
72. In speaking and listening, pupils throughout the school make good progress in extending their skills. Younger pupils build progressively on the good start provided at the Foundation Stage. They participate very effectively during the introductory activities for literacy lessons. They listen attentively and demonstrate a growing confidence in responding to their teachers' questions and in contributing to discussion. They benefit considerably from opportunities to discuss with their teacher, particularly during the text and word level elements of the literacy lessons. For example, the pupils in Year 2 were able to draw on their learning in science to offer some good adjectives which might be used in their writing. They expressed their ideas clearly and confidently. By the end of the key stage, most pupils demonstrate a growing vocabulary and an increasing awareness of the need for more formal vocabulary in some situations.
73. Older pupils communicate effectively in an increasing range of situations and are able to vary their vocabulary and expression to suit both purpose and audience. This was particularly evident

during a lesson on the use of persuasive language in Year 5, when the pupils prepared to write letters to the local council complaining about environmental issues. During class discussion, many pupils showed a good ability to put learning into practice as they expressed their various concerns in very persuasive terms.

74. In reading, pupils make consistent progress at both key stages, and a majority of pupils reach standards which are at least appropriate for their age. Younger pupils, in particular, benefit greatly from the support and interest provided by their parents for the school's home reading scheme. By the end of Key Stage 1, most average and high attainers read with growing accuracy and understanding and make appropriate use of an increasing range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning. A significant proportion read with increasing fluency and expression. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs benefit greatly from the additional attention provided by support staff. Although their reading standards are below those expected for their age, they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
75. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils read fluently and accurately from books selected from the school library and other sources. Higher ability pupils express preferences for certain types of books and authors and give reasons for liking particular characters in the stories they read. They make good use of their growing reading skills to find information to support their work in other subjects, either from reference books or by retrieving information from CD-ROM sources.
76. In writing, progress is less consistent and standards are not as high as they should be at the end of both key stages. Younger pupils benefit from lessons to develop their interest in writing. In Year 1, for example, the pupils responded positively and produced interesting work based on the ideas of Quentin Blake, an author and illustrator of books for children. By the age of seven, a good majority of the pupils write their ideas in sequences of sentences and are beginning to make appropriate use of capital letters and full stops. Many show good imagination when they write in their journals or produce accounts of educational visits to places of interest. This was evident, for example, in the work produced following the visit to St Oswald's Church, Winwick. In general, however, the approach to teaching writing at Key Stage 1 is not sufficiently systematic to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential, and this is reflected in the limited amount of written work produced by the pupils. Some of the higher ability pupils in particular are capable of making more progress and achieving better standards than they do at present.
77. At Key Stage 2, pupils make generally good progress in writing during lessons, although this is not yet reflected in their end of key stage attainment. A number of measures have been put in place to bring about improvements and are having a positive impact on the quality of written work, particularly in Years 5 and 6. For example, the emphasis placed on planning a piece of writing, and on drafting and re-drafting to improve quality are important factors in raising standards. As a result, the writing of the older pupils is becoming increasingly well organised. Good use of time is made during literacy lessons to introduce new techniques and skills in writing for different purposes. The quality of the writing produced by the older pupils is considerably better when they engage in relatively brief writing exercises during literacy lessons than it is when they write at length, either in English or as part of their work in other subjects. Too often, in such instances, the quality of writing is spoilt by poor spelling and ineffective application of the new skills acquired during literacy lessons.
78. The increasing use of information and communication technology is serving to stimulate the pupils who enjoy seeing their work in print. In addition, the use of the spell-check facility on word processors is helping them to identify and improve weaknesses in their spelling. Some good opportunities are created for pupils to extend their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in Year 4, the pupils produced clear sets of written instructions related to work on electrical circuits and older pupils produced good written work on the life cycle of a flowering plant as part of their work in science.
79. Throughout the school, the pupils show good attitudes towards their work in English. They enjoy literacy lessons and contribute enthusiastically during the whole-class elements. The younger

pupils settle quickly and listen attentively during introductions to lessons and sustain concentration well during the learning activities. The sensible and mature way in which the older pupils work co-operatively when required is a particularly good feature in the learning.

80. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. All of the lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory, and half were good or better, including one lesson of high quality in Year 5. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how the pupils learn. They make generally satisfactory use of the National Strategy for Literacy, but there are some shortcomings.
81. The teaching of the whole-class elements of literacy lessons is consistently good. This helps the pupils to make good progress in developing an interest in issues raised in the shared texts and in increasing their confidence in asking questions or sharing opinions. The good ability of teachers to offer clear explanations to introduce lessons and to develop pupils' interest through perceptive questioning are strong features during whole-class teaching. In the best lessons, group work is organised very effectively to challenge and extend pupils of all abilities. In general, however, group activities are not organised effectively. In many lessons, tasks during group work are set at only one level. This often means that potentially higher attaining pupils are not challenged appropriately and therefore make insufficient progress, particularly in developing their skills in writing. This weakness in the teaching is apparent at both key stages, but is particularly apparent at Key Stage 1, where pupils are often organised in mixed ability groups for this element of literacy lessons. Apart from the organisation of group activities in some classes, lessons are planned effectively, and class management is a consistently good feature which contributes positively towards good standards of behaviour.
82. The teachers and support staff co-operate very effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. This is an important factor in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Assessment procedures are generally appropriate and the introduction of targets for improvements for pupils is a helpful development. Currently, however, many of these targets are not sufficiently specific to allow accurate measurement of pupils' progress.
83. After the last inspection, standards in English fell significantly. Some of the factors contributing towards the general decline have already been explained in other sections of this report, such as the section on standards. This inspection indicates that the school is now better placed to address weaknesses and raise standards in English. This is reflected in the improving quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2. Highly effective work by the English co-ordinator for Key Stage 2 has contributed positively towards the improvement in teaching for older pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. Evidence from the inspection shows attainment in mathematics to be average by the time the pupils leave the school. The results in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 were well below average, both when compared with all schools nationally and with schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. Although test results have been declining in the national tests in recent years, staffing problems have disrupted significantly the education of the pupils taking these tests. These problems have been eliminated during the last couple of terms and standards are now improving. Progress overall in this subject has been good since the last inspection. Over the years, boys have been performing significantly better than girls. The school can give no explanation of why this should be the case and the inspection found no evidence of girls being disadvantaged in mathematics. The statistics show that most of the pupils who are in the current Year 6 have made at least satisfactory progress from their performance in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 1997.
85. Bearing in mind the average levels of ability in numeracy when children reach statutory school age, and their average attainment by the time they leave, pupils are making satisfactory progress through the school in this subject. The pupils with special educational needs and those with

English as an additional language are also making satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment in mathematics, due to the well-planned support they receive and the clear targets they are set for improvement.

86. By the time they are 11, the pupils are average for their age in numeracy but below average in their ability to use number. They do written calculations accurately, but their ability to work quickly mentally is less well developed. Although most pupils apply their knowledge to new situations satisfactorily, the teachers sometimes miss opportunities to reinforce this aspect as fully as they might. They often ask the questions, "How did you work that out?" or, "Is he/she right?", but this is not followed often enough by the subsidiary question, "Did anyone find a different way?" or even, "How many ways can you think of to work this out?".
87. The pupils' knowledge of shapes and measures is average at age eleven. They work out the areas of triangles and use co-ordinates in four quadrants successfully. Their knowledge of data handling is also average and is well supported by their work in information and communication technology. For example, the pupils are able to draw a variety of graphs using computer software and interpret information from these graphs. However, some pupils do not always choose the most appropriate style of graph for the given data.
88. The national tests for 2000 show attainment at the age of seven to be above average compared with all schools nationally and well above average compared with similar schools. Standards in mathematics at this age have been rising consistently in recent years. Evidence from the inspection shows attainment at present to be average at this age. The pupils make satisfactory progress in this key stage.
89. By the time they are seven, pupils' standards of numeracy are average, but they are below average for their age in their ability to use number. Opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce this aspect fully, for example, the teachers do not always encourage the pupils to think of alternative strategies for calculating. The pupils have good understanding of place value and most read, write and order numbers up to 100. They calculate well, using practical materials when necessary. The pupils' knowledge of shapes and measures is not as well developed as their ability with number, but is still average. Most pupils have satisfactory understanding of measuring using standard measures and know the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes.
90. The pupils enjoy their lessons and show very good levels of concentration. A good feature of their response is the way that they settle quickly to group work, even if they are not being directly supervised. They also co-operate effectively in their work when required. The pupils treat resources with respect and relationships are very good in the classrooms. The good quality of pupils' attitudes to their work has a positive effect on the progress that they make.
91. The quality of teaching in mathematics observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Although there were many good features in most lessons, there was one significant weakness in almost all lessons seen. The school is using the National Numeracy Strategy for planning, but is allowing considerably longer for each of the mathematics sessions than the recommended time. As teachers are not including more supplementary material, the pace of the lessons is too slow. The pupils often begin to lose interest, particularly in the oral mental sessions and the oral introductions. A further negative factor caused by these timings is that the mental session is often not as sharp and brisk as it could be.
92. The teachers manage their classes well and create an orderly environment in which the pupils find it easy to learn. Lessons are well structured and teachers use a good balance of instruction and activity to retain the pupils' interest. However, there are often occasions when the objectives that teachers set for the pupils' learning in lessons are too general and do not show the learning that is to take place by different groups. This results in pupils not always learning at the optimum pace as they often all start with the same work. It also has the effect of making it difficult for teachers to assess how effective their teaching has been and what stage of learning

each pupil is at. This then has the added effect of teachers not knowing what individuals or groups of pupils are to learn next.

93. Tests are used regularly to assess pupils' attainments and the results are being recorded to enable the teachers to track their progress. Very good and useful systems have very recently been put in place in Key Stage 2 to record pupils' attainments and, although those in Key Stage 1 are good, they are not as useful as those in use in Key Stage 2. Although individual targets for improvement are being set, short-term targets are not yet being set consistently for each child, so this good practice does not yet further enhance knowledge of each pupil's progress.
94. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has carried out some monitoring, interviewing pupils to establish their levels of knowledge and understanding, analysing their written work and also monitoring teaching. This has been effective in raising standards. There is a large display in the Key Stage 2 hall which raises the profile of the subject. This is going to be used well after the national tests, when pupils in Year 6 will be creating questionnaires about the mathematics in the display for the younger pupils.

## SCIENCE

95. In the national teachers' assessment for seven-year-olds in the year 2000 the overall level of attainment was very high when compared to all schools. The number of pupils reaching the higher than average level three was well above average. These results were similar to those in mathematics but higher than those in writing and reading. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in the year 2000, the overall level of attainment was well below average when compared to all schools and also when compared to schools with a similar background. The number of pupils reaching the higher than average level five was also well below average when compared with all schools but below average when compared to schools with a similar intake. Results in science were similar to those in mathematics and English. Over the past five years results have been inconsistent, although last year there was a significant improvement over the previous year's results. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection. On average the results of boys have been better than girls over the past five years.
96. Evidence from the inspection is that attainment overall is just below the national average for 11-year-olds although more than half of the pupils are reaching the required standard. This is because there is a significant number of pupils in the group who have special educational needs and whose attainment as a result is below the national average. A further important factor is that the earlier education of these pupils was seriously disrupted by prolonged staff absences. At present, the school is not providing this group of pupils with work which is specifically targeted to their particular requirements in order to raise their attainment to the required standard.
97. The pupils have acquired good investigative skills in science and all the pupils know how to set up an experiment and understand the importance of a fair test. For example, in Year 6 the pupils were investigating sound and carried out a number of experiments in groups. In one group the pupils blew down pieces of plastic tubing of different lengths but with the same diameter to discover the sound that was produced. They found that the longer the tube the lower the sound. They concluded that the air vibrated more slowly in the longer tube and therefore produced a lower sound. Another group experimented with guitar strings and found that the shorter the string, the higher the sound. Each of the six groups presented their findings to the whole class and all came to the same conclusion, that when vibrations are slower, perhaps due to length, the note will be at a lower pitch. Pupils in Year 5 are also able to set up experiments and in one lesson they were investigating materials to see if they contained air. Once again the pupils knew how to set up a fair test and ensured that the quantities used for each type of material were the same. The pupils knew how to observe the results and presented them in a clear logical way. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 carried out experiments in a similar way to investigate how bones develop in humans and how the roots of green plants draw water and nutrients from the soil and transport it to the leaves to be converted into food for the plant.
98. Besides being taught how to carry out experiments correctly and to think in a scientific way, pupils also acquire a wide knowledge of science. They know about the important function of the heart. When talking about healthy living, they know that smoking, alcohol and drugs are harmful to health. They explain what happens when materials like wood or water are heated and that some changes that occur can be reversed. The pupils are able to draw diagrams to explain how simple circuits work and how switches operate. It is clear that investigative skills and scientific knowledge are systematically built upon as the pupils move up the school and that progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory.
99. The attainment in science is above the level expected of seven-year-olds, whereas at the last inspection it was very high and this variation is because of the different year groups inspected. An important factor in achieving these standards is that from an early age the pupils are taught effective investigative skills in science. In Year 1, for example, the pupils know the difference between a push and a pull force. They understand about a fair test and carried out an investigation, with the help of the teacher, by rolling small model cars down ramps to see how and why which ones travelled the furthest. In Year 2, these investigative skills were built upon when the pupils were using their senses to investigate the characteristics of unusual fruits like mangoes and figs. The pupils worked with a good degree of independence when recording their

findings. Besides learning how to investigate, pupils also acquire a wide range of scientific knowledge. For example, they distinguish between objects that are living and those that have never been alive. When talking about plants they can explain that seeds need water, soil and light to grow into healthy plants. Pupils also know about simple circuits and how materials have similarities and differences. The majority achieve their potential and make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs.

100. The pupils' attitude to learning is good throughout the school and this is an improvement since the last inspection when attitudes were reported satisfactory for the older pupils. The teachers have developed a warm relationship with their pupils and the pupils co-operate well and give of their best. Usually the pupils listen attentively in lessons, are well motivated, enjoy their work and behave well, and this has a significant impact on learning
101. Overall teaching is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching in the upper part of the school was satisfactory. The teachers set out to teach the pupils how to think and investigate in a scientific way and they are successful in their aim. In many lessons, the teachers are able to create a learning atmosphere in the classrooms which encourages scientific investigation. For example, in Year 6, pupils investigated sound and the groups made presentations of their findings to the rest of the class. The teachers' knowledge of science is good and this is used well to plan interesting lessons. There is good use of questions to make pupils think scientifically and all pupils are encouraged to join in discussions. Lessons are planned well and the appropriate equipment is always available. As a result no time is wasted and pupils do not become frustrated because of poor facilities for their investigations. The teachers ensure that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used and consolidated when writing up the results of experiments and using calculations in investigations.
102. Management of the subject is satisfactory. There is a comprehensive scheme of work and an overall plan to ensure that all necessary aspects of science are covered. Science lessons are monitored in the classrooms and science books are examined on a regular basis. The pupils are regularly assessed and records kept so that targets can be set and progress monitored. However, information and communication technology is not used frequently enough to support learning in the subject. Science makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. As only two lessons were observed during the inspection, judgements are mostly based on examination of work and discussions with pupils and teachers.
104. The standard of attainment of 11-year-olds is average and is similar to that reported at the previous inspection. The pupils use a variety of skills, media and materials to create pictures and make models. For example, in one class pupils made some beautiful pictures entitled "Sunset" in which silhouettes of the skyline were cut out of black paper and arranged on a yellow and orange background. There is much direct teaching of skills which has a positive effect on learning and this is an improvement since the last report.
105. The pupils are also introduced to the work of famous artists. For example, after visiting the Lowry Gallery, the pupils created some wonderful pictures with the appropriate stick figures. This time they used dull pastel crayons to create the atmosphere of an industrial town. Art is also used to support other subjects of the curriculum and some pupils drew pictures of Vikings and Anglo-Saxons using crayons. Pupils experience 3-dimensional art and in one class the older pupils were making large papier-mâché masks for puppets to be used as characters in short plays they were writing in literacy lessons. The pupils now use sketchbooks and these contain some examples of observational drawings using different quality pencils to produce a variety of tones and shadings. However this is an area for development. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

106. The standard of attainment for seven-year-olds is also average and is similar to that reported at the last inspection. The pupils experience a wide range of art activities. For example, some pupils made collage flowers out of straws. Others made portraits of their friends in the class. Pupils are also introduced to famous artists and some pupils made lovely paintings with thick vivid colours in the style of Kandinsky. Art is also used to support other subjects of the curriculum and after visiting Winwick Church the pupils painted pictures of the church itself and also the artefacts they saw inside. Some use is made of art programs on the computers, but this is at an early stage of development. It is clear that the pupils make satisfactory progress and improve their skills by building on the ones they have already acquired.
107. The pupils have a good attitude to learning throughout the school. The teachers have warm relationships with their pupils and as a result they respond and co-operate well. The pupils' behaviour is good and this has a significant impact on learning in art sessions. The pupils are well motivated by the interesting work set by the teachers. As a result the pupils enjoy their art lessons and give of their best. Boys and girls work well together and evaluate each other's work in a friendly way.
108. Overall teaching throughout the school is good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The teachers have an enthusiastic knowledge of art and teach art skills directly which has a beneficial effect on the rate of learning in lessons. For example, in one class the pupils were making casts out of modelling clay on which they were going to make papier-mâché masks. The teacher went to great lengths, explaining how to shape the features of the face. The practical sessions are organised effectively so that the lessons run smoothly and pupils enjoy their work. The teachers have high expectations and in most lessons the teachers and pupils evaluate the work done. This analysis of work raises self-esteem and increases pupils' confidence and improves their literacy skills by enabling them to express their thoughts clearly to a group of peers.
109. The curriculum is enriched by visits to cultural centres like the Lowry Gallery. Art makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons because of the arrangement of the school timetable. Consequently judgements are made based on examination of previous work done by pupils and discussions with teachers and pupils.
111. Most pupils reach the standard of attainment expected of pupils aged eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was unsatisfactory. The reason for this is that the pupils are taught effective strategies for design and technology and, therefore, know how to design and make models. For example, in one class the pupils had made a model lighthouse with a simple electric circuit which switched the light on and off. The pupils had planned well, selected suitable materials and evaluated the end product effectively. The pupils learn a wide range of processes and techniques used in designing and making objects. For example, one class was involved in food technology and after a good deal of research, designed and made a healthy sandwich. Design and technology is also used to support other subjects. For example, some pupils designed and made model houses in the style of Ancient Greece when they were studying that topic. Progress for all groups of pupils is satisfactory which is an improvement since the last inspection.
112. The attainment for seven-year-olds is average and this is similar to the previous inspection. Once again this is because at an early age the pupils are introduced to effective strategies for design and technology. For example in one class pupils drew some vehicles first, before making them out of construction kits. The pupils are involved with a range of models and different aspects of the subject. For example, the pupils regularly enjoy undertaking food technology. Design and technology is also used to support other subjects. For example, pupils designed and made hats for characters in stories they were reading. The pupils also investigate objects to see how they work and as a result of looking closely at musical instruments they made colourful shakers with

which they could make their own music. Progress is satisfactory because the teachers gradually build upon the skills that have already been taught and give pupils the opportunity to improve their strategies.

113. Although she has only been in post for a short time the knowledgeable co-ordinator has already had an impact. She has ensured the policy is relevant and has introduced a comprehensive and effective scheme of work. This includes a thorough assessment system so that the progress of pupils can be monitored. The audit of the subject revealed that resources are inadequate and that in particular some of the tools are obsolete and the range is narrow. Little use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

114. The last time the school was inspected, standards in geography were average at the end of both key stages. These standards have been maintained. There has been an improvement in developing pupils' geographical enquiry skills, resulting from good teaching at both key stages and an overall improvement in teachers' subject knowledge and understanding.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge of local places. This is due to good teaching, which strongly emphasises environmental walks. The pupils understand the importance of the local canal to life, past and present. This leads them to extend their geographical skills by plotting routes on maps, drawing maps of the locality and a plan of their home.
116. At Key Stage 2, pupils know about the equator, continents, mountains, rivers and lakes and can explain the differences between polar, continental, desert, tropical and equatorial climates. Younger children in the key stage understand the water cycle, while older pupils recognise patterns in the weather in different parts of the world. Most pupils can name the major oceans and use atlases to draw their own maps, showing the equator and the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer. The teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is good. For example, in a well prepared Year 5 lesson, the pupils were highly motivated by the teacher and made a good attempt at understanding the problems that face the people of Kapskowny. The pupils made good progress in this lesson due to lively teaching, with the teacher using her good subject knowledge well to motivate the pupils.
117. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. The good links established with other subjects enhanced pupils' learning well. The pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in relation to their ability. Pupils at Key Stage 2 produce a good amount of written work and the quality of pupils' learning is good. These factors have a beneficial effect on the progress that is made.
118. The co-ordinator provides good clear educational direction for the subject. In both key stages teachers assess pupils' work regularly. The subject is monitored well. However, currently there are no opportunities provided for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching in the classroom.

## **HISTORY**

119. At the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected of children of their age. The levels of attainment are similar to those recorded at the time of the last inspection. The pupils at Key Stage 2 have improved their ability to draw together information from different sources and the quality of teaching has improved, especially at Key Stage 2.
120. By the age of seven, the pupils show satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past, for example, by re-telling stories and using role-play in Victorian times and by looking at how the role of the local canal has changed over time. They show an increasing understanding of the passing of time in relation to the events in their own families and they

remember important facts about major events they have studied, such as the spread of the Great Fire of London. This work is successful because the teachers have a clear grasp of the subject. Their questioning is perceptive and pupils are suitably challenged and interested in their work.

121. The work is taken forward well in Key Stage 2. By the age of 11, pupils have a good knowledge of key dates and events in British history. They develop appropriately detailed knowledge of periods of history, including Ancient Egypt, the Ancient Greeks and the Romans. The pupils start to combine information they gain from different sources and realise the importance of archaeological 'finds' and museum collections. At both key stages, pupils' sense of time is developing well.
122. Teaching is good throughout the school and this motivates the pupils. They apply themselves well and show interest in their work. This was well illustrated in a Year 1 lesson, when the teaching focused on canals and narrow boats. The pupils were fascinated by the effective use of artefacts such as a model narrow boat and an anchor. Showing good knowledge of the subject the teacher was successful in getting the pupils to identify how the use of canals has decreased over time.
123. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator monitors the subject carefully and keeps a close eye on pupils' achievements throughout the school. At present she has had no opportunity to monitor teaching throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

124. Standards by the age of 11 are average and the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress through the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, where standards in information and communication technology were below average and improving standards in this subject was a key issue to be addressed.
125. The strongest area of learning is that of communicating information. The pupils have produced some very effective displays, including pen pictures of themselves, incorporating a photograph taken on a digital camera. The older pupils have also made some attractive Christmas cards. A painting program has been used to create some very effective tiling patterns. The pupils are developing their skills in control, pupils in Year 4 for example, being able to write routines to create a pre-determined shape, using a screen turtle. The school is linked to the Internet and this is used well. For example, the pupils have downloaded primary sources to enhance their study of history. Information and communication technology is also used well to support subjects such as mathematics, by using data handling programs to analyse data and produce graphs, for example. It is also used as an integral part of literacy in the drafting and redrafting of text.
126. By the age of seven, standards are also average. Within this, some of the younger pupils have well-developed skills. For example some children in the Foundation Stage used a digital camera to produce their own 'passports'. The pupils have experienced communicating data in word processing. For example, pupils in Year 2 can produce writing, using full stops and capital letters. The pupils in this key stage are already beginning to save and retrieve their work and many can print out their work without help. There are examples of pupils in Year 2 producing meaningful and clear graphs of data that they have collected.
127. The pupils enjoy using the computers and other technology and there is obvious enthusiasm when they are given these opportunities. When using computers, pupils are confident and sensible and take turns and share the tasks well.
128. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall. The teachers know the skills they are trying to teach and the pupils therefore learn these skills well. The teachers are using common planning, which ensures that the pupils are learning skills consecutively. Teachers make good use of a technician from a local High School, along with some work-

experience students, to assist pupils when they are in the computer suite. This ensures that the pupils are never having to wait too long for help and the pace of their learning is therefore maintained. The teachers are good at using information and communication technology in support of other subjects such as English, mathematics and history.

129. The co-ordinator has produced Internet guidelines and a sound scheme of work. The policy is outdated, as it was completed before the setting up of the computer suite and therefore makes no reference to it. The resources for the subject are satisfactory but they could be used more effectively. The school has a small suite of seven up-to-date computers. There are also computers in each classroom, but these are older and are not linked to the school network. This means that teachers are unwilling to use them as the pupils cannot continue tasks which they have begun in the suite. The suite is timetabled for each class, but is still empty for over half the week. As the teachers are good at integrating information and communication technology within the curriculum, this time when the computers are unused is wasted. There are occasions in lessons where the computers are not used so effectively and learning is slower. This occurs when the whole class is using computers at the same time. This means three and sometimes four pupils sharing and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning. A more effective use of the suite is when the teachers have an alternative, related task for half the class, with each half taking their turn on the computers. There is a very new system of assessment for this subject but it is too new to be of any use in informing the teachers which skills have been learnt by the pupils.

## **MUSIC**

130. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music-making activities. The tuition provided by the co-ordinator and visiting specialist teachers enhances the provision for older pupils. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils attain standards appropriate to their age and make good progress. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, there has been a recent improvement in teaching at Key Stage 2, due to the use of the co-ordinator's expertise alongside class teachers.
131. Younger pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch, rhythm and dynamics. They use unpitched percussion instruments to accompany songs. Hymns and songs are read competently and teachers make good use of these materials in literacy and numeracy lessons.
132. The pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to create percussion parts to songs and compose and record original compositions. Older pupils are developing a sound knowledge of music from other cultures and are able to express their musical preferences or experiences.
133. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. The pupils are taught to create or improvise music and to evaluate their performances. They create their own musical notation and use this to play each other's pieces. This recent improvement is directly due to the good leadership and recent influence of the co-ordinator. Generally the teachers plan their lessons well and use resources effectively to motivate pupils and to take their learning forward. Teachers use correct musical terms throughout lessons, which pupils adopt in their discussions.
134. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in composition work. There is a more structured approach to teaching music and the co-ordinator provides good, clear educational direction for this. She has monitored planning, teaching and pupils' work. However, there is still no formal system for assessing or recording pupils' progress in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are generally in line with the national expectations and consistent with standards apparent at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils make generally good progress in all aspects of physical education.

136. In dance, pupils make good use of space to travel in different directions, varying their speed and the levels at which they work in response to the teachers' guidance and music. The pupils show good imagination and body control. For example, pupils in Year 3 produced an imaginative response when asked to produce movements to simulate plants growing. They were able to vary their actions and to make good use of the advice provided by their teacher in order to improve their performance.
137. In games, pupils develop their skills through practice and learn to apply them in small-sided competitive games. They demonstrate increasing skills in sending and receiving a pass, throwing and catching, striking and fielding the ball. Opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities in netball and soccer enable many of the older pupils to enhance their skills. In addition, players from the local Warrington Wolves Rugby League Team have visited to provide coaching. Athletics is taught in classes at Key Stage 2 during the summer term and some pupils take part in extra-curricular athletics and cross-country.
138. The school meets the requirement to provide swimming lessons for pupils at Key Stage 2 and the great majority of pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres unaided before leaving the school at the end of Year 6.
139. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. Lesson planning and organisation achieve a good balance between the teachers' direction and demonstration and activities which present an appropriate challenge to the pupils. Class management is generally good, promoting good behaviour and enabling the pupils to develop good attitudes towards the subject. The pupils respond enthusiastically in all aspects of physical education. They show a good ability to plan and perform, particularly in dance, and are able to improve their performance through evaluation. Teaching makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and ensures good progress, in that all of the pupils are appropriately included and involved in all aspects of the programme of work.
140. Physical education is co-ordinated effectively. The programme of work generally meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, although the school is at an early stage in implementing new curricular requirements and there is some unevenness in the amount of time allowed for physical education in some classes. There are sufficient resources for most aspects of the subject, but there is a need for more gymnastics apparatus which is of an appropriate size for younger pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

141. Most pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the age of 11 and this reflects good achievement by many pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection which said that expectations were not being met. There are several reasons for this. The school has introduced a comprehensive scheme of work with a clear overall plan, so that the teachers know what to teach and when. The teaching is good and records are kept of the yearly assessments so that the school can ascertain the progress being made by the pupils.
142. The pupils know about important people and events related to religion. They investigate other world religions and show an understanding of moral issues. For example, they know about Christmas and how Mary gave birth to Jesus in a stable at Bethlehem. They can relate how Jesus was crucified and that this is why the cross is the symbol of Christianity. At the same time they also know that Muhammad was a special messenger of God and is the most important figure in the religion of Islam. As well as Christian festivals like Easter and Harvest, the pupils also know about the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and the Islamic festival of Eid. In discussion with the pupils it is clear that investigating this range of world religions effectively challenges pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and they have an obvious respect for the beliefs of others. They understand that differences exist but they are linked to the customs of other religions. For example, in one class the pupils were comparing Christian churches with Jewish synagogues and investigating why the buildings and the artefacts in them were different.

143. Moral aspects of religion are studied and pupils are familiar with the Ten Commandments. They understand that rules for life such as these are necessary for a happy and stable society in the same way that the school rules are for the benefit of all the people in the school. The pupils are aware how religion has an impact on peoples lives and also on their own. For example, in one class the pupils were reflecting on the topic of courage and were looking at the life of Harriet Tubman, a freed Christian slave, who devoted her life to the dangerous task of rescuing other slaves from the plantation in America. Progress in religious education is good which is an improvement since the last inspection.
144. The achievement of most pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good and the standard of attainment is what is normally expected of seven-year-olds. The pupils learn about Christianity and other world religions and relate this knowledge to their own experience. For example, the pupils visit Winwick Church and look at the artefacts and symbols there. All the pupils contributed to an impressive display of paintings of the church and artefacts. In one class the pupils were looking at the robes the vicar wears at various times of the year and they were delighted when they were able to wear them. Besides studying Christian Festivals like Easter and Harvest Festival, the pupils also learn about festivals celebrated by other cultures like Divali and the Chinese New Year. The pupils are also given the time to reflect on their short lives and experiences. For example, the pupils in one class were encouraged to think about someone or something that was wonderful in their lives and share their thoughts with the class. To extend this experience, the teacher read to the pupils the story of the Creation from the Bible, which resulted in an interesting discussion. Good progress is being made by all groups of pupils and this is similar to that reported in the previous inspection.
145. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The teachers have a warm relationship with their pupils and consequently they co-operate well and give of their best. For example in the class where the teacher was using the story of Harriet Tubman to demonstrate Christian courage and perseverance, she used drama to make the story come alive. Through the teacher's personality and confident relationship with her pupils, the drama was realistic and uninhibited so that the learning was effective and enjoyable. Because most of the lessons are interesting and pitched at the right level, the pupils listen attentively to the teachers, are keen to answer questions and take part in discussions. Overall, behaviour is good because of the good relationships in the classroom and because the good teaching motivates pupils.
146. Overall, teaching is good and this has a positive effect on the good rate of learning seen in most lessons. This is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. For example in one class when pupils were comparing churches with synagogues the teacher was able to provide pictures and drawings to help the pupils to understand clearly why the buildings and artefacts were different. The teachers ask thoughtful questions so the pupils need to listen carefully in order to be able to join in the discussion. Educational visits and artefacts are well used to make learning more interesting and relevant to the pupils, for example, the visit to Winwick Church and the vicar's robes. Teachers help to consolidate literacy skills when they ask the pupils to write about stories from the Bible, for example, the story of the Prodigal Son.
147. The management of the subject is good. A comprehensive and worthwhile scheme of work is in place with an overall plan so that teachers know what to teach and when. The co-ordinator looks at the planning and also examines pupils' books to gauge the quality of the work produced. Each year pupils' attainments are assessed and recorded so that their progress can be evaluated. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.