

INSPECTION REPORT

MONKSDOWN COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104559

Headteacher: Mrs M Peart

Reporting inspector: Mr George Brown
(OFSTED No: 21060)

Dates of inspection: 6 - 9 November 2000

Inspection number: 224164

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Monksdown Road Norris Green Liverpool Merseyside
Postcode:	L11 1HH
Telephone number:	0151 226 1606
Fax number:	0151 256 6281
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Canon W Todd
Date of previous inspection:	12 January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
George Brown (OFSTED No: 21060)	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Physical education	The school's results and achievements.
		Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		English as an additional language	
		Equal opportunities	
Clive Lewis (OFSTED No: 22831)	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well are pupils taught?
		Information technology	
		Art	
		History	
		Special educational needs	
Doreen Shotton (OFSTED No: 19439)	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Peggy Waterstone (OFSTED No: 30677)	Team inspector	English	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Geography	
		Music	
		Foundation Stage	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 10
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11 - 13
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13 - 14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15 - 16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16 - 17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18 - 19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20 - 21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22 - 25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26 - 38

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Monksdown is a broadly average size infant school with 189 pupils on the main roll and a further 50 children in a Nursery class who attend part-time. Most pupils come from a white British background but there are three pupils on roll for whom English is an additional language. The school is situated in the Norris Green district of Liverpool. Over 80 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is very high. There is significant movement in and out of the area, with upwards of 50 pupils coming to or leaving the school other than at the usual time of transfer. Many children enter full-time schooling with basic skills well below the national average, particularly in levels of speech and general literacy. Most come from the school's own Nursery. Currently, some 23 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, an above-average figure. Several pupils have relatively complex learning or behavioural difficulties and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The school has been subject to several staff changes in recent times with four teachers having left in the past two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Monksdown provides a satisfactory education for all its pupils and serves its community well. Although standards in spoken and written English are low, the great majority of pupils achieve well over time, and make mainly good progress in their everyday work. The leadership of the headteacher is a strength of the school and there is a growing sense of teamwork among staff and governors who are committed to further school improvement. Staff are hard-working and conscientious and the quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. Given its circumstances and the pupils' low attainment on entry, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides good, effective leadership.
- Most pupils achieve well and significant numbers make good progress over time, particularly in mathematics.
- Children make a good start in the Nursery and the accommodation provided for these and other children throughout the school is very good.
- Staff are successful in creating a bright, stimulating environment for pupils' learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and make good progress in relation to their previous learning.
- There is good provision, overall, for the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- Levels of personal support, care and educational guidance are consistently good.
- There are effective links with parents and the wider community, which help pupils to learn better.

What could be improved

- Standards in English are well below average, particularly in relation to speaking and writing. Pupils find it difficult to write imaginatively, at reasonable length or for a range of purposes.
- The attitude of pupils towards their learning could be improved.
- There are some weaknesses in the school's curriculum and its management. These include a lack of structure to children's teaching and learning in Reception, the lack of an overview of pupils' learning at Key Stage 1 and few established co-ordinators to help monitor and evaluate standards in their subjects.
- School attendance is unsatisfactory, overall, and a significant number of pupils is frequently late.

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 January 1998, when serious weaknesses were reported in areas of leadership and management, standards in the core subjects and in the education of children under five. A good quality action plan was devised and the school has made good improvement in relation to the key issues it was asked to address. The leadership and management of the school has become more focused on the need to raise standards; relationships have improved and a greater sense of teamwork has evolved. The Investors in People Award has recently been granted. Senior staff and governors have a clear view of their specific roles and provide good support for the headteacher. Standards of attainment are improving, particularly in mathematics, science and information technology. The quality of provision for children under five, including teaching, has also improved, particularly in the Nursery. The use made of assessment across the school has now reached a satisfactory level. While attendance levels have risen

slightly, the lateness of a significant minority of pupils continues to give rise for concern. The school shows good capacity to improve still further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	E	C	C	A
Writing	D	C	D	A
Mathematics	E	B	E	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The results of National Curriculum and other tests confirm the below average standards achieved by Key Stage 1 pupils in recent years, particularly in relation to writing and mathematics. Standards in spoken and written English are frequently low, with significant numbers not achieving the levels anticipated for their age. Among the factors that have created low standards in the past has been the low attainment of children on entry, the numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the significant number of staff changes, which has interrupted pupils' learning. Pupils find it difficult to write imaginatively, accurately and at reasonable length. However, the performance of pupils in mathematics and science has improved considerably in the past twelve months and pupils' standards in mathematics are now broadly average. This is partly due to better teaching, but also to the extra structure and support provided by the Numeracy Strategy. Standards in science, while still slightly below average, are now rapidly improving owing to the introduction of more specialist help and a concentration by teachers on pupils' investigative work. The unconfirmed results for 2000 show that pupils continue to achieve well in relation to similar schools, reaching above average standards in reading and mathematics and in line with average standards in writing. This inspection shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in other subjects are broadly at the level expected for the age of the pupils, although higher attainment is rare. An exception is in art, where standards are good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. While most pupils clearly enjoy school, significant numbers lack urgency and real enthusiasm in their learning. Many find it difficult to persevere and to complete their work on time and to a good standard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Pupils generally co-operate with their teachers and behave in a sensible manner. Some lack concentration and need constant reminders about the standards that are expected of them.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form sound, effective relationships with staff and with each other. The attention paid to the pupils' personal development is good although the opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative in everyday learning could be increased.
Attendance	Well below average. A significant number of pupils is late arriving and this prevents them making a prompt and efficient start to the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

At both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. It was good or better in approximately one third of observed lessons in the Nursery or Reception and was good in approximately one quarter of lessons at Key Stage 1. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred at Key Stage 1. Teachers plan their work well. Some effective teaching occurs in science, mainly as the result of good specialist guidance, and also in physical education and art across the school. A few good or very good lessons occur in the teaching of mathematical and creative development, together with information technology, among children under five. At Key Stage 1, good teaching occurs occasionally in English, mathematics and religious education, although teaching in these and other subjects is, generally, simply satisfactory. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good, and is effective in extending pupils' learning. A consistent strength of the teaching across the school is the secure management of the pupils. In the Foundation Stage, teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under five and their use of support staff and learning resources is good. While the teaching of English and mathematics is generally satisfactory and occasionally good during the literacy and numeracy sessions, pupils are not being helped enough to improve their written and particularly their spoken language. Nevertheless, the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have both helped to extend pupils' learning. Establishing an excellent computer base, combined with some specialist support teaching, has led to rapid progress of many pupils in information technology. Satisfactory attention is paid to the acquisition of pupils' basic skills, although some improvements could be made in relation to the teaching of both reading and writing in this respect. Learning was mainly satisfactory in the lessons observed, but, over time, pupils make good progress in much of their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, overall, in both the new Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. An appropriate, statutory curriculum is in place that helps bring breadth and balance to pupils' learning. Weaknesses include the lack of a curriculum overview, lack of structure in the teaching and learning of Reception children and some rather outdated documentation that does not reflect and support current practice.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good throughout the school. Pupils experiencing difficulties are identified at an early stage and are supported through well-prepared Individual Education Plans combined with effective teaching.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good for the relatively few pupils who enter the school. Pupils are integrated well into lessons and wider school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for moral and social development and very good for cultural development. The planned provision for spiritual development is satisfactory but has not been integrated into pupil's everyday learning and experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school places careful emphasis on the welfare, safety and nurture of its pupils. Procedures for child protection are very good.

Good links are made with parents and the wider community, although the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is only satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key	Good. The headteacher is an effective leader. All those with management responsibilities agree as to the point the school has reached, together with a list of priorities designed to help it move forward. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and the

staff	curriculum lack the consistency and rigour needed to make these even more effective. More subject co-ordinators are also needed to relieve the headteacher of some of her current curricular responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have very specific roles and make far-reaching contributions and decisions relating to many aspects of school life. They give good support to the headteacher and the wider school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is a growing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how leadership and management can improve its overall performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Annual finance and grants are well-targeted to maximise the impact on pupils' learning. Available resources are used well and the school has effective procedures in place to help monitor its budget, taking good account of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • The new Nursery provides a good start for children. • There are good opportunities for parents to be informed about their child's progress. • Children make good progress, overall. • Computer education is very good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frequency of staff changes that can affect the progress of some pupils. • The range of extra-curricular activities could be improved.

The inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed here by parents. Those aspects identified as pleasing parents most are also good features of the school's overall provision. The school has undergone several staff changes and periods of absence and this is undoubtedly unsettling to some pupils. Inspectors agree that the school now requires a period of steady growth characterised by as few staff changes as possible. The range of extra-curricular activities is broadly similar to other schools of this type and size and others are planned for the current school year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the National Curriculum tests for 1999 indicate that the attainment of seven-year olds is in line with the national average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Based on teacher assessment, standards in science were also well below average. Standards in reading and writing were well above those in similar schools in 1999 and broadly in line with similar schools in mathematics. Over a four-year period, standards in these subjects fell below the national averages, overall. Girls achieve higher standards than boys. Relatively few pupils attain the higher levels anticipated for some seven-year-olds. Provisional results for 2000 show an increase in standards in both mathematics and science in relation to similar schools.
2. Inspection findings confirm that weaknesses in attainment occur in both pupils' spoken and written English and that standards remain below average in these areas. Standards in reading are broadly average and pupils enjoy this aspect of English, achieving well over time. The most recent results in mathematics combined with inspection findings give a firm indication that standards in mathematics are rising and are currently broadly in line with the national average. There has been a similar rise in attainment levels in science, although standards remain below average, overall.
3. Assessment tests given to four year-olds indicate that children enter compulsory schooling with basic skills well below the national average. Their speech is particularly poor and few have many enriching experiences beyond their immediate environment. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage and become subject to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, the attainment of pupils remains well below average in many key areas of learning, although pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). Children make particularly good strides with their personal and social development. Children in Reception classes have sound physical skills and are relatively adept at work on computers. Spoken language remains weak and many children lack a good range of key words that they can use successfully in early written work. Levels of creative development are below average, overall. The Nursery, in particular, is a very good environment for learning and, over time, children acquire the beginnings of many basic skills that they will use higher up the school.
4. At Key Stage 1 standards in speaking remain well below average. Pupils find it difficult to explain what they are doing and many lack confidence when speaking in front of adults, often expressing a preference to keep their answers as short as possible. Listening skills are better but even older pupils find it difficult to concentrate and maintain a positive attitude towards their learning over a sustained period. Standards in reading are better and teachers are careful to supply a good range of literature to motivate the pupils towards good reading habits. By the time they are seven, pupils recognise a satisfactory range of vocabulary but apart from a few higher attaining pupils, a minority shows good understanding of texts, make sensible inferences or express coherent views about the content of books. Standards of handwriting and general presentation are mainly below average and the pupils' wider writing skills, including spelling, are unsatisfactory.
5. Attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 1 is now average, overall. This is mainly due to the improvements that have occurred in pupils' mental strategies and their speed of working, mostly as the result of the successful introduction of the Numeracy Strategy. Problem-solving remains a relative weakness. Attainment in science is below average, overall, but pupils have recently made good progress in their investigative skills and now use their growing knowledge and understanding to increasingly good effect.
6. Standards of attainment in information technology are broadly in line with those expected for the age of the pupils. The school has recently completed a centralised computer suite for information technology and this is already proving an excellent resource for learning, with the added advantage of extra support provided by a specialist teacher. Even very young children are adept at controlling the mouse and using software appropriate to their age. Computers are not yet used well enough to help support pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subject areas such as mathematics, history and geography.
7. Except for geography, standards in the other foundation subjects are broadly at the levels expected for the age of the pupils and most make satisfactory progress during lessons. It was not possible to

judge standards in design and technology owing to very limited evidence, although the subject is planned for satisfactorily. In their geographical work, pupils have little background knowledge of places and people beyond their immediate environment, although this is improving as they become involved in wider studies, such as following the course of the Liverpool Clipper race around the world. In music, pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are in line with age-related expectations, particularly in singing, which is a strength of the overall provision. Standards in history and physical education are at the levels expected for the age of the pupils and the school continues its high traditions in dance owing mainly to the teaching skills of the visiting specialist teacher. Standards in art are generally good and pupils experience a wide range of techniques and materials to work with. In religious education, pupils reach the standards outlined in the locally agreed syllabus by the time they are seven.

8. Given their well-below-average standards in pre-school skills, knowledge and understanding when children enter the school and their mainly below-average standards on leaving, satisfactory value is added in terms of the standards achieved. Pupils achieve well over time. Compared with pupils in similar schools, pupils at this school continue to do well in much of their learning, although there are few indications of significant numbers, pupils having the potential to reach consistently higher standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to previous learning. This is the result of the quality of their Individual Education Plans and well-targeted adult support. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very small, but their needs are well-targeted and a new language is not a barrier to their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory, although there are some weaknesses in their overall response to learning. Children in the Nursery settle quickly and well into the school's routines. In all other parts of the school, most pupils come to classes very readily and many display positive attitudes to some aspects of school life. For example, they sing enthusiastically and show a keen interest in books. Where teachers' expectations are high, pupils display generally sound and sometimes good attitudes to their work. Pupils respond satisfactorily to the tasks they are asked to complete, but often find it difficult to sustain concentration for an appropriate amount of time. They work willingly rather than with an eager desire to learn. Most show an interest in their work, but often lack self-motivation and real enthusiasm.
10. Behaviour is satisfactory in lessons and around the school, as when pupils move around the quite lengthy corridors. There is a clear behaviour policy that pupils understand and which teachers apply consistently. Pupils are polite to adults and to one another and they take good care of the building and all of the resources that are available to them. The school building, which has been in use for about three years, is in very good condition and the wall displays and investigation tables are looked at, and used, with care. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was observed and pupils and parents are confident that any issues will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively according to the school's policy. There have been no exclusions in the last school year. The inspection took place during an extremely wet week when pupils were able to spend very little time in the playground; it was not possible, therefore, to make a firm judgement about playground behaviour.
11. Pupils respond satisfactorily to the opportunities they are given for personal development. They are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own work and are involved in the daily routines of the school, such as taking registers to the office. Pupils form satisfactory relationships with adults and with one another, and they co-operate sensibly; for example, when required to tidy their tables at the end of lessons. The development of values and beliefs, including a respect for the feelings of others, is good; it forms the main part of the school's declaration of its aims and values and is promoted during assemblies and when pupils sit with their teacher to talk about their feelings and attitudes.
12. Attendance is unsatisfactory, although it has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in relation to unauthorised absences. The attendance rate remains well below the national average, overall, but has improved by almost 3 per cent since January 2000. Authorised absence is high, and, although three or four families cause particular concern, this is not confined to any year group. Registers are marked correctly and records are carefully kept using a computerised system. Pupils are recorded as late after 9.20 a.m. and there are several pupils in each class who are late more than once a week. This lateness interrupts classes and has an adverse effect on pupils learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Teaching in the great majority of lessons seen – 98 per cent - was satisfactory or better, and only one lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory. However, only 30 per cent of teaching was good or better and of that, 5 per cent was very good. This is approximately half the proportion of good or very good teaching currently found in inspections nationally.
14. The quality of pupils' learning, including the rate at which they acquire key skills, knowledge and understanding over time, is good. However, this overall good progress was not consistently reflected in lessons seen during the inspection, where the quality of learning was, on the whole, more satisfactory than good. To some extent, this is partly explained by the relatively new teaching staff, with some teachers new to the profession and others teaching a different age group for the first time. In both cases, the quality of their rapport with pupils needs time to develop more effectively. A major factor, however, which contributes to this situation is the sometimes relatively unsatisfactory response of some pupils that necessitates frequent teacher-intervention in order to maintain their concentration and to secure their satisfactory progress even in well-planned lessons. This has an impact on the overall quality of learning.
15. In the great majority of lessons, teachers display generally secure knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum and the subjects they teach. Planning is generally sound and incorporates successfully the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and, where appropriate, the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education. All teachers have planned for and implemented the suggested lesson outlines and Programmes of Study based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, with the adoption of the Numeracy Strategy in particular leading to a significant rise in mathematical standards by the end of Key Stage 1.
16. The quality of teaching in the new Foundation Stage is satisfactory, overall, with a small percentage of good and very good teaching. Teachers and support staff work together well, planning a wide range of activities and ensuring that children are secure and safe in a stimulating environment. However, throughout the Foundation Stage, there are too few occasions for encouraging and developing pupils' spoken language. During the inspection, it was noted that some pupils remain almost mute throughout a session. They move happily and generally confidently between activities, but communicate very little, either with other children or with supervising adults. As a result, many make too little progress in their speaking skills. Although the recently adopted approach for children in the Foundation Stage is generally appropriate for Nursery-age children, it is sometimes less effective in the Reception classes. Teachers allow pupils to choose from planned activities, but there are periods when the teaching lacks sufficient structure to promote much-needed basic literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, children miss opportunities to practise such skills in a more systematic way.
17. At Key Stage 1, teaching in all subjects is satisfactory, overall, although a few weaknesses occur in the teaching of geography. The teaching of English is satisfactory, overall, although the teaching of speaking skills is unsatisfactory, because there are limited opportunities for pupils to practise and develop these skills throughout the school. Teachers have adopted the National Literacy Strategy appropriately and, in most cases, have a secure knowledge of the literacy skills the pupils need. Teachers sometimes follow the Literacy Strategy too rigidly. For example, pupils are sometimes asked to sit and listen for lengthy periods when significant numbers find this difficult to do. Pupils are not developing their writing skills across a wide range of subjects. This needs to be expanded. The teaching of reading has recently been given considerable emphasis in the recent past and is satisfactory, overall, although more pupils should understand about phonics and how a range of strategies can help them read and learn unfamiliar words. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, overall, and some very good teaching was observed. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher had a very good rapport with the pupils, used questioning well to assess and guide their learning and generated a good level of enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils made very good progress as a result.
18. Teachers are generally secure in their understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. They put appropriate emphasis on developing the pupils' ability to calculate mentally at speed. This also helps to engage and stimulate pupils' interest in number. Teachers also assess the pupils' learning at the end of lessons. Their planning includes suitable emphasis on group activities that build well on pupils' previous learning. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on pupils practising and using

their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics, such as science. Teaching in science is good, overall, as in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher had prepared the lesson well using a variety of visual and audio experiences that kept the pupils involved throughout the lesson. In all other subjects and in religious education, teaching is broadly satisfactory; in physical education the quality of teaching is frequently good.

19. In the great majority of lessons, teachers' classroom management skills are effective and a strength of the overall provision. Teachers are largely successful in motivating pupils and encouraging appropriate behaviour. However, in a small minority of lessons, despite well-planned work with clear lesson objectives and good use of interesting resources, teachers' ways of controlling pupils were ultimately ineffective in overcoming their inappropriate behaviour and attitudes to work. This slowed the pace of teaching and reduced the overall quality of learning for most pupils. In other instances, however, teachers' expectations of pupils' work are too low and they sometimes fail to check high noise levels and unsatisfactory behaviour. In a number of otherwise satisfactory lessons, and frequently following an interesting and well-paced introduction to the lesson, the pace of work slowed considerably. This occurred, for example, in a design and technology lesson and spoilt what otherwise would have been a very effective learning session.
20. Most lessons are planned satisfactorily, with clear objectives as to what pupils are expected to learn. These are sometimes made very clear to the pupils at the start of a lesson and reinforced throughout the session. Teachers' plans generally take into good account the differing needs of pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs. Such pupils are identified early and are provided with detailed Individual Education Plans containing clear learning targets that ensure they make good progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate support and work that is generally well-matched to their needs. Teachers and support staff provide pupils with an appropriate and frequently good blend of help and challenge. One measure of the success of the school's provision is that pupils are regularly moved off the Register of Special Educational Needs as well as others being placed on it.
21. Teachers are conscientious and work hard for the benefit of all their pupils. They do their best to ensure that resources are used effectively and imaginatively to help motivate and interest pupils. A stimulating learning environment is consistently created. Satisfactory use is currently being made of the excellent resources in the very new information technology suite, although the support for teachers in whole-class information technology lessons is not always sufficient. In the best cases, support staff are used well; they work effectively with class teachers and are well-informed about the teaching and learning objectives for the lesson. However, in a number of instances, support staff were not used efficiently to help individuals or groups of pupils make faster rates of progress.
22. Teachers assess pupils' work constructively on a day-to-day, informal basis. In the best examples, teachers demonstrate good questioning and explaining skills. They also tend to make good links to previous learning including reference to other subjects wherever possible. However, there are instances where the rather excessive use of praise is inappropriate and not justified either by pupils' work or the level of their response. Although homework is not consistently set, the range of homework is generally appropriate for Key Stage 1 and meets the approval of parents.

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

23. The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. It covers a broad range of learning opportunities, including all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education. The school also provides an appropriate breadth of experiences that support the personal development of the pupils, including aspects of sex education and health education. The range of well-displayed work helps create a rich and varied learning environment. However, there are some weaknesses in the organisation of the curriculum as a whole, particularly the absence of a complete overview of pupils' learning and the lack of policies and subject documents that reflect current practice. Also, too many subjects are overseen, temporarily, by the headteacher. A more equitable balance of responsibilities would mean a less daunting workload for the headteacher as well as ensuring that all subjects of the curriculum are well-promoted and regularly monitored and assessed.
24. The school places good emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been carefully introduced to help support basic learning in each year group. There is an effective programme supporting the personal development of pupils and all pupils have equality of access to the full curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and also for the very few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs are well supported by good quality Individual Educational Plans and by support in the classroom, although more classroom assistants are needed. Several pupils have behavioural difficulties and are well supported by the management skills of teachers and other staff. The curriculum helps all pupils to integrate well into the normal school community. The intellectual development of pupils is promoted satisfactorily within the curriculum. However, the curriculum requires constant evaluation to try and extend the range of opportunities for pupils to learn in the most effective ways.
25. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and the indoor facilities are very good, particularly in the Nursery. The provision for the under-fives has improved considerably since the previous inspection. All aspects of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are carefully planned for, although the outside provision for physical development in the Nursery is unsatisfactory. In an attempt to make more children plan their own work and bring about an increase in independent learning, the curriculum for the Foundation Stage includes daily periods when there is no direct teaching input and the curriculum is unstructured. This has mainly a negative impact on the pace and rigour of learning.
26. Despite the overall adequacy of the curriculum at Key Stage 1, there are a few weaknesses, some of which have remained since the previous inspection. There is, for example, no total overview of what pupils are expected to learn and when. Although all subjects are planned for and frequently linked satisfactorily across the curriculum, many have policies and schemes that do not reflect current practice and give teachers and pupils insufficient support in the classroom. Exceptions are in the core subjects, where the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has brought sound structure to learning. There is also now greater emphasis in the science curriculum on pupils' investigative skills and better provision for the higher-attaining pupils. This is helping to raise standards.
27. Some policies and schemes do not indicate when they are expected to be reviewed and evaluated. Although the school achieves a successful blend of pupils learning, based on a balance of knowledge and skills, there is no detailed outline as to how teachers will avoid unnecessary repetition or ensure that learning is truly progressive.
28. Despite the lack of overview in some subjects, the short-term planning of topics and daily work is satisfactory. Teachers most frequently plan their everyday work in pairs and this helps bring added scope and interest to pupils' learning. The medium-term plans contain useful information about the activities to be undertaken by pupils, including the provision for visits and visiting speakers. The school's growing relationship with the community is very fruitful and the curriculum is enriched both by educational visits and by visitors invited into school to talk to pupils. For example, pupils in the Foundation Stage enjoyed a visit from the police, with dogs, during the inspection week and the whole school had a 'Spanish Day' including Spanish teachers reading during the literacy hour. The curriculum has already drawn some benefit from pupils closely following a round the world boat race, involving the husband of a governor, who regularly sends information and related work to them from various points on his journey.

29. There is a small but satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities designed to enrich and broaden the experiences of the pupils. These include a child/parent computer club, a dance group and a very well-developed gospel choir. A new Environmental Club has been sponsored by Liverpool City Council and will support the pupils in their efforts to develop the garden areas in the school grounds. The school benefits from satisfactory relationships with partner institutions, such as the local junior school on the same site, and satisfactory induction and transfer procedures are in place.
30. Satisfactory provision is made for the spiritual development of pupils, although some weaknesses exist. Collective worship is a mixture of whole-school and class-based worship that together, provides an adequate platform for spiritual development to occur. Themes such as 'we are all special people' and 'The Creation,' provide pupils with moments of valuable insight into the values of others, the place of God in the thinking and lives of many people and opportunities to reflect on their own place in the world. The role of quiet reflection, possibly in prayer, together with the potential role of music, is not fully explored; the curriculum is also not well-planned to support spiritual development. Teachers have not considered carefully the significance of spiritual development in their everyday work and several good opportunities for this to occur go unheeded. For example, poetry, science and art are not well-used as sources of spiritual development.
31. Good provision is made for the moral and social development of the pupils. These have remained strong elements of the curriculum since the previous inspection. The school's aims and values are well known and there is a good attempt to ensure that all pupils are well known and valued for their own uniqueness. There is also a strong moral framework that pupils recognise as a common part of all classrooms and which they accept and try to contribute to on a daily basis. Much of this is based on a central school ethos concerned with 'Working Together, Learning Together.' This and the importance of teamwork are openly displayed around the school and are frequently referred to as a key to school life. Through this, pupils develop a keen sense of right and wrong and know of the consequence of their actions on others in the school and in the wider community. Religious education is also used effectively in this context.
32. The importance of social and other aspects of personal development is a major pre-occupation of the school. The relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults help to provide a good social framework for the whole school community. The behaviour policy of the school is also of considerable significance in helping to shape the outlook and attitude of pupils. Their weekly timetables reflect the importance given to such development. Wherever possible, pupils are given regular opportunities to work in pairs or small groups as a means of developing their social and collaborative skills.
33. The provision for cultural development is currently very good. Visits to places of local interest help reinforce the cultural and local heritage of the pupils. Studies of Liverpool as a place of cathedrals, football, music, maritime history and museums are undertaken in geography and history. In music, pupils sing from a variety of viewpoints, including traditional and overseas sources. The school gospel choir is well-established and gives pupils valuable insight into faith through music. During the year, monthly themes are widely developed into school projects, using different countries as a source of knowledge and inspiration. Pupils visit Liverpool's Chinatown and the school holds an African Week using the Osun Drum Foundation. Visitors hold attractive African dance workshops. During the year, artists and musicians play to the pupils and in June there is an eagerly awaited Brazilian carnival involving a samba band and carnival costumes. In religious education, pupils learn well about world religions, and displays of artefacts and related creative work contribute well to the learning environment of the pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. They are strengths of the school and have improved since the previous inspection. As part of child protection, the school has built up very good relationships with social services, who act promptly when necessary. The teacher responsible has up-to-date training and ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. First aid and medical matters are attended to diligently and their organisation has been improved. The general welfare, security and health of the pupils are high priorities for the school. For instance, a nurse is specially employed to come in each month to check for headlice. Health and safety matters receive good attention and there are no immediate hazards. The school is kept very clean and the environment is stimulating and welcoming. The school does all it can to make the transition from infant to junior school smooth. There are exchange visits for pupils and opportunities for teachers to

talk to junior school staff about the reports they pass on.

35. The monitoring of pupils academic performance and personal development is satisfactory. Although procedures for assessing progress are relatively weak, the current systems reflect an improvement on those described during the previous inspection. Teachers know individual pupils well and take care to monitor their personal development, particularly in respect of their behaviour. One of the strengths of the teaching is the management of pupils. Rewards and sanctions are well used to promote good behaviour and are effective in eliminating oppressive behaviour. No bullying was seen during the inspection and parents do not consider it to be a problem.
36. Educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good. Teachers encourage pupils with praise and emphasise that each pupil is special and has special abilities, although this approach can sometimes be excessive. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils personal development, particularly those with special educational needs, are well-developed throughout the school. The school has good systems for monitoring attendance and these are much improved. The deputy headteacher has been appointed as the attendance co-ordinator and the pupil attendance and Welfare Education Officer works closely with her for two hours every week. Records are carefully reviewed every week and pupils causing concern are referred promptly for home visits to be made, where appropriate. Additionally, parents of pupils whose attendance has improved are complimented on their efforts. It is pleasing that during the present term, of thirteen letters sent to parents in respect of attendance, ten have been in respect of improvement. There are awards each week for the class with the best attendance and for pupils who have done particularly well. As yet, problems with lateness have not been tackled successfully, but the poor overall attendance is gradually improving.
37. There is good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator maintains the register of special educational needs pupils; the procedures for early identification of such pupils, for placing them on the register, for keeping parents informed, and for reviewing progress regularly, are all good.
38. At the time of the last inspection, the school did not have a whole-school policy for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. Satisfactory progress has been made towards the development of assessment procedures, although these are not yet complete. Each pupil has an individual file containing work samples, but a school profile of assessed and levelled work is not yet in place. The levels achieved are not indicated clearly on the retained samples of pupils' writing and this means that progress cannot be recorded. The most experienced teachers know their pupils well but the fact that written work is not assessed and moderated means that some staff are unclear about the standards to which their pupils should be working. Consequently, some tasks and activities are not always matched accurately to pupils' needs.
39. Assessments are made, in consultation with parents, when children enter the Nursery, and assessments are carried out within seven weeks of the pupils' entry into the Reception classes. This year's analysis of results has been delayed by local computer processing problems. Teachers discuss these results and use them to inform their teaching plans. The school is beginning to enter the results of its own assessments on to a computer, together with those drawn from statutory tests, so that pupils' progress can be tracked and the results analysed.
40. Detailed analysis of all pupils' statutory test papers is carried out by the local authority. The results are then used to inform curriculum plans for the following school year. Assessments in mathematics are used well to inform lesson planning, as are the Individual Education Plans of children with special educational needs. Teachers' informal assessments help them to set appropriate tasks for groups of pupils during the literacy hour.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The parents views of the school are good. Those with whom contact was made at the parents' meeting and during the inspection praised the school and agreed it was much improved since the previous inspection. However, it was mainly parents connected with the Parent-teacher Association who attended the parents meeting, eight in all. Also, only 25 per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire. It is understood that this is the usual pattern and the greatest challenge is therefore to gain greater involvement from more parents. The parents spoken to are very pleased with their children's progress and consider the behaviour in the school to be good. They consider the school to be welcoming and appreciate the open door-policy. They can speak to the teachers at any time

and receive a prompt and courteous response to any concerns.

42. The effectiveness of the schools links with parents is good and has improved. The school has made considerable efforts since the previous inspection by appointing a Parental Links Co-ordinator. She is given time to make home visits for Nursery children and to chair the meetings of the Parent-Teachers Association. Events for pupils are arranged, such as discos and picnics, and money is raised for charity as well as for school trips. The Association also arranges basic training courses for parents, such as in first aid and laptop computers. Additionally, child care, literacy and numeracy courses have also been offered. About twelve parents have so far been involved. There are plans to develop after school clubs and a drop, in facility for toddlers. It is recognised that more parents need to be encouraged to come to school meetings, such as those arranged to discuss their children's reports and the work their children are to do. The school is doing all it can to make this happen.
43. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The annual school reports contain detailed information about progress, but tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative in the foundation subjects. Targets are set for future efforts. The school prospectus and regular monthly newsletters are both informative and helpful and the annual report from the governors contains all the required information. Parents are kept informed about the work their children are expected to cover and share action plans for those who have special educational needs.
44. The impact of parental involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. Those parents who come into school to help in the classrooms make a significant impact and contribute considerably to the children's learning. This is a strength, and is very much appreciated. However, apart from the handful of committed parents who help with work at home as well as at school, there are many who do not as yet respond. The school offers a lot of encouragement to parents to make a contribution and the Home/School Agreement has helped at least some parents understand the importance of home/school liaison.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership and management of the school is good and remains central to its continued growth and development. The school is well led by the headteacher who has a clear sense of vision and provides good educational direction. There have been considerable improvements in both staff relationships and communications since the previous inspection, an acknowledgement of which was made with the recent Investors in People Award. Together with other senior staff and governors, the headteacher has a clear commitment to raising standards and establishing challenging targets for school improvement. She has also been instrumental in introducing a greater sense of teamwork within the wider life of the school, although some of this work remains at an early stage, particularly in relation to the role and responsibilities of subject managers. In this she has not been helped by the many staff changes that have occurred and the understandable reluctance to give inexperienced staff subject responsibilities at early points of their careers.
46. The role of the subject leaders is relatively weak. The headteacher has too many curricular responsibilities and cannot manage effectively all the subjects she has to oversee. The subject managers' work is particularly weak in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of standards and the quality of teaching in the subject areas. Where some of this has occurred, for example, in English and science, the influence of the co-ordinators on their subjects has been relatively good. For science, the school has appointed an outside consultant who has done much to raise standards and teaching in this area. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the wider curriculum, together with the overall quality of teaching has not been consistently carried out. This leads to uncertainties about what priorities should be expressed in each subject area and about understanding where teaching skills have to be strengthened.
47. The management of pupils with special educational needs is good. Until very recently, the headteacher has been the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The newly appointed SENCO provides good support for teachers and pupils, supported by the headteacher. The management of the school cares very well for its pupils and the provision of additional support for pupils with Statements of Educational Need is also very good. There is good liaison between the SENCO, classroom teachers, classroom support assistants and outside agencies.
48. The governing body has made good progress since the last inspection, when its role and impact

were judged to be unsatisfactory. Its contribution to school life and management is now consistently good. Governors meet their statutory requirements and combine with senior staff in a commitment to raising standards and securing school improvement. The governing body meets regularly and has established a range of useful working committees that carry out much of its routine work. Individual governors have clear, acknowledged strengths and these are put to good use by the school. Governors are involved in forward planning to a useful degree and many are seen regularly in school attending to their own subject areas. As a group, they now have a more accurate sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and endeavour to ensure that the aims of the school are met.

49. The annual school development plan is a well thought out document and gives an accurate assessment of future areas for growth. More and better informed contributions are needed from subject managers about their own responsibilities. The plan makes appropriate links with available finance and contains clear statements about where their responsibilities lie, together with how the school will evaluate its future developments and progress.
50. The finances of the school are well administered and monitored by the headteacher, finance officer, governors and school secretary. Grants are appropriately used and monitored. Good links are made between the annual budget and the priorities expressed in the School Development Plan. The school is an efficient unit and maintains an annual credit balance. The admin officer is an experienced and efficient member of staff and has everyday routines that are thoroughly and speedily carried out. The latest local authority audit showed the school to be using good financial and administrative systems.
51. Current staffing levels are satisfactory for meeting the needs of the pupils and the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The number of support staff to help pupils with special educational needs is under review. There are also some good and some unsatisfactory examples of the wider use of support staff and this provision too should be reviewed as a matter of routine. In some classes, support staff are underused as a valuable resource, while in others they are an integral part of the successful learning of many pupils. As part of the Investors in People Award, staff development measures have been extended and improved. The accommodation is very good and includes some excellent facilities, such as a new computer suite, a large hall, a spacious library, a room for parents and bright, airy classrooms. The overall impact of these and other areas of the school is to ensure that pupils experience a welcoming and enjoyable environment in which to learn. The outdoor provision is being extended to provide improved facilities for the Foundation Stage, together with gardens that will act as a resource for creativity and science for all pupils. The quality of learning resources is good, overall, although there are some gaps in the provision made for physical education and geography.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to raise standards of attainment and the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Raise standards in English by:

- Providing a greater range of planned opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking skills;
- Raising teachers' expectations of pupils' writing, particularly its accuracy, length and presentation;
- Critically examining the framework in which children write. Plan for a greater range of opportunities and contexts that will enable pupils to develop their basic writing skills across the curriculum, including the use made of various styles for different settings and audience;
- Improving teachers' methods of assessing accurately the quality of what pupils write, including a greater understanding of the levels they are at.

(paragraphs: 2, 4, 17, 58, 71-78)

Increase the effectiveness of the curriculum on pupils' learning by:

- Developing a total overview of what is to be taught and when, thus avoiding the likelihood of repetition or lack of progression in pupils' learning;
- Ensuring that the school adapts its curricular policies and support documentation to more closely reflect the teaching and learning practice that actually occurs;
- Ensuring that subject managers are appointed to all curriculum areas as soon as possible and that they be given specific roles in the management and monitoring of standards in their subjects;
- Ensuring that within the Foundation Stage, children spend a greater proportion of their time in well-planned and specific teacher-led activities that will help bring more structure and understanding to their everyday learning.

(paragraphs: 16, 23-28, 46)

Improve the attitudes and overall response of pupils to their learning by:

- More careful assessment of their attitudes over time, including how best pupils can be encouraged to sustain their efforts while also raising the level of pace and rigour in their learning;
- Teachers introducing a wider range of teaching methods and learning resources that will help sustain pupils' interests and give them even greater incentives to learn and perform to their potential.

(paragraphs: 9, 14, 97)

Improve on the current unsatisfactory pattern of school attendance by:

- Ensuring that the procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are evaluated, refined as necessary and then fully implemented, directing these towards those pupils and their families where regular problems occur;

- Reviewing the school's policy on lateness. Ensure that this is accurately reflected in attendance registers as a means of monitoring the likely impact of lateness on the progress and learning of individual pupils.

(paragraph: 12)

In addition to the above, the governors should consider including in their post-inspection plan, the following less important areas of weaknesses:

- Make more effective provision for the spiritual development of the pupils; *(paragraph: 30)*
- Analyse the use made of support staff currently employed in the school and evaluate their overall impact on pupils' learning. *(paragraph: 51)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4.5	25.0	68.2	2.3	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– Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	189
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	140

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	41

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	2.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	35	29	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	27	26
	Girls	29	29	25
	Total	57	56	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (77)	88 (81)	80 (84)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	26	32
	Girls	29	26	27
	Total	56	52	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (81)	81 (85)	92 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	104
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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	471,572
Total expenditure	461,189
Expenditure per pupil	2,041
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	10,383

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	218
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Per centage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	9	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	21	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	14	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	21	5	1	3
The teaching is good.	39	16	0	0	2
I am kept well-informed about how my child is getting on.	35	15	3	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	11	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	7	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	16	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	38	15	0	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	16	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	14	8	4	10

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

53. Children enter the Nursery soon after their third birthday and transfer to the Reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, there were about 50 children on roll in the Nursery, half attending in the morning and half in the afternoon. This number is expected to increase. There is a similar number of children attending full-time in the two Reception classes. In consultation with parents, Nursery staff carry out the assessment of children's attainment on entry and use the basic results to help inform their future planning. The statutory 'base-line assessments' are carried out in the Reception classes during the first seven weeks of the autumn term. These provide a valuable source of information as to the starting point of children's learning. Standards of attainment on entry are well below those expected nationally and remain well below national expectations as children move into Year 1 and formally begin the National Curriculum.
54. The internal accommodation and the resources available in the Nursery are excellent. The staff make good use of available space and provide a stimulating environment. Displays of children's work, such as that on the senses, provide areas for further thought and investigation. Children are introduced to the routines and expectations of the school in a warm and sensitive manner. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, and is sometimes good. Teaching is most effective when there is a definite focus for the activity in which children are engaged, which enables them to make clear gains in their learning. The teacher and nursery nurses work well together and provide experiences and activities which are appropriate for children working towards the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage. The proportion of time during which children are engaged in focused activities is relatively small and should be increased as the term progresses so that they have opportunities to develop language and mathematical skills in a more structured way. Good links with children's homes are fostered by the useful practice of parents' helping children to copy their names when they arrive, and by the arrangements that are made for children to take books home to share on a regular basis.
55. The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception classes ranges from satisfactory to very good. The best teaching is observed when there is a clear focus for children's learning. However, a significant proportion of children's time is spent on unstructured activities that, while helping to develop aspects of language and social skills in a very informal way, do not always help to achieve the Early Learning Goals in a rigorous, progressive manner. Reception teachers ensure that their support staff are well-informed about the day's lessons so they are able to assist appropriately with developing children's knowledge, understanding and skills. Accommodation in the Reception classes is satisfactory and resources are good. A very attractive and stimulating environment has been created through careful displays both inside and outside the classrooms of the youngest children.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. Nearly all children enter the Nursery with immature skills in personal and social development. They make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals in this area, but only a minority is likely to achieve the standard expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1.
57. Children tend to play and work on their own, or at best with another child, but do not often talk productively to each other. However, they show consideration for others and treat property with care. A few children concentrate well, but others quickly tire of an activity and move on. When children make a plan as to how they are going to spend their time, they do not necessarily follow it, nor do they report back accurately on their activities. Teachers do not always know which activities the children have been engaged in during a session, so a breadth of learning is not assured. Teachers and assistants join children freely in their role-play, such as in 'a hairdresser's,' helping to develop their ideas and extend their language. Teaching and general provision in this area is satisfactory, overall.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Appropriate emphasis is placed on spoken language in both the Nursery and the Reception classes in order to develop children's immature speaking and listening skills, but even more could and must

be done to seek further improvement. Many children come to school with a very limited vocabulary and find it hard to express themselves and to understand instructions. Nursery children are beginning to recognise their names written in various places on display. Some children in the Nursery are able to maintain their concentration and to sit quietly to listen and respond to a short story. In one lesson, the teacher used a story well to extend children's knowledge of colours and the names of animals. Children in a Reception class used a non-fiction text to identify an initial letter and were enthusiastic about finding the letter in classroom displays. They demonstrated an ability to concentrate well. Sometimes, teachers' expectations of the children's abilities in language are not high enough, with the result that opportunities to increase the pace of learning are lost. Children generally have positive attitudes to books. They enjoy looking at the pictures and sometimes describe what they see. However, very few children in the Reception classes know simple words by sight, nor do they know many initial letter sounds. Specific reading and writing activities occupy a small proportion of the school week and, partly as a result of this, the standards children achieve are below expectations. Children are making relatively slow progress towards the achievement of the early learning goals in this area of the curriculum. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, there is clear scope for improvement, particularly in the development of early reading and writing.

Mathematical development

59. Children in the Nursery are able to say number names as the register is taken and begin to develop their understanding of 'bigger' and 'smaller'. They count out loud during practical activities, such as when the mid-morning snacks are given out. In Reception, children joined in a class session on making patterns with two colours or two shapes, but were not asked to continue freely with this activity on their own so that their understanding could be further developed and then assessed. Whilst teaching is satisfactory, overall, teachers need to review the proportion of direct teaching of skills and knowledge that would enable more children to achieve the early learning goals by the end of their Reception year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. 'Light' is the science topic throughout the school during the autumn term. Experiences are well planned so that there is progression in the levels at which pupils are expected to work. In a good Reception lesson, the teacher provided a good range of examples to help children sort out which items give or reflect light and which do not. This activity stimulated children's interest and they became enthusiastic about investigating further, using a good display during a carousel of activities. In the same class, a book was used well to develop children's understanding of the changing seasons.
61. Provision for this area of the curriculum in the Nursery includes using the opportunities provided by 'snack' time to extend children's knowledge about a range of foods. During the inspection week, children had the opportunity to sample various dips using naan bread and bread sticks. They also made and cooked samosas, which they were proud to take home. Children have many opportunities to use construction kits and to build railway tracks, selecting sizes and items appropriate for the purpose.
62. Children in the Nursery demonstrate an ability to move graphics around a computer screen by manipulating the mouse. In a Reception class lesson, the excellent facilities available in the recently developed computer suite enable children to make very good progress; they use the mouse accurately to make something happen, such as making text larger or smaller, or clicking and dragging images to re-position coloured shapes.
63. Provision for the development of knowledge and understanding of the world is good and most children are likely to achieve the expectations of the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is generally good.

Physical development

64. Extremely wet weather during the inspection restricted opportunities for outside activity. When children move around the Nursery, their classroom, or the school in general, they show good awareness of space and the presence and needs of others. During a Reception class lesson in the hall, children achieved well because instructions were clear and effective. They also demonstrated their ability to travel safely in different directions, locating spaces and using different speeds.

65. Children in the Nursery and the Reception classes have a large area in which to play outside but this lacks a locked gate, and there is no equipment to develop climbing and balancing and to stimulate imaginative activities. The school has plans to improve facilities in this area.
66. Many opportunities are provided for children to use small tools, such as crayons, glue spreaders and paint brushes, and to mould malleable materials. Most make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in this area, mainly as the result of their own efforts during the many good experiences that are provided. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

Creative development

67. This is an area of learning where children are likely to meet the expectations of the early learning goals. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes, children have good opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form; producing attractive prints and patterns using mathematical shapes, and making collages with a variety of materials. They enjoy singing simple songs from memory and are beginning to recognise repeated sounds and patterns in music. Communicating ideas during their role-play is an area many pupils find difficult but, overall, progress in creative development is good. The planning of teachers' work relating to this area is good.
68. At the time of the last inspection, provision in the Nursery was considered unsatisfactory in some areas because the curriculum was not considered totally appropriate to children's changing needs. It was considered that in the Reception classes, children made up much of the lost ground.
69. The quality of teaching and learning in the Nursery has improved since the last inspection, partly because planning is related directly to the stepping-stones leading towards the early learning goals. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, in Reception classes but staff should review their teaching methods where more direct teaching of knowledge and skills is required.
70. Overall, provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. In the areas of physical development, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world, children make progress that is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. However, there continue to be some weaknesses in the teaching of literacy and mathematics, particularly in the Reception classes, that result in children making insufficient progress towards achieving the early learning goals in these areas by the time they move into Year 1.

Note: Early Learning goals are the targets set for children to achieve by the end of their Reception year.

ENGLISH

71. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, standards were broadly in line with the national average for reading and below the national average for writing. The school's results were well above those for similar schools, suggesting that pupils at Monksdown achieve well. Provisional results for 2000 suggest that standards in both reading and writing have fallen, but, in making comparisons with previous years, the fact that a significant number of pupils had special educational needs or left the school while others joined should be taken in to account during any subsequent analysis. Attainment on entry to the school is very low in comparison with what is nationally typical of children starting school, particularly in speech. Pupils make good progress, overall, to attain the standards they do by the time they are seven. Results vary year by year and there is no clear trend.

72. Standards in reading and writing have improved, overall, since the last inspection. The school's adoption of the National Literacy Strategy has helped the development of pupils' reading skills but the previously identified weaknesses in handwriting, presentation and spelling have not been dealt with successfully. Sometimes the guidance in the framework suggests activities for a particular term for which pupils in this school are clearly not yet ready. Further consideration should therefore be given to the ways in which the literacy strategy framework is used so that whole-class sessions build on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding and meet their current needs.
73. Inspection evidence indicates that, despite good progress in some aspects of English, standards are below and sometimes well below average in speaking and listening and writing. Teachers often try hard to encourage pupils to develop their ideas orally during class discussions, but few pupils are able to answer using more than a sentence and often they use just a few words. Appropriate emphasis is placed on reading development but there are some inconsistencies in the ways reading is taught in different classes and this should be reviewed. For example, there is no agreed whole-school approach to the ways in which individual, group, and guided reading are planned for, nor to the amount of time that is allocated to each aspect, although some good and very good practice exists. Writing skills are under developed throughout the school. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length and the range of purposes for which they write is very restricted. The school has been involved with the literacy initiative since its national inception and is aware that now a thorough evaluation is required so that there is an appropriate balance between the different strands that make up the English curriculum.
74. Pupils usually listen politely to their teachers and to the comments of their peers. Some teachers use good questioning skills to help pupils to develop their answers, but often pupils have too little opportunity to do more than give brief responses. They have few opportunities to work collaboratively and this further restricts the development of speaking and listening skills. The plenary sessions at the end of lessons are not always used effectively to give pupils the chance to explain what they have been doing. Some teachers try to develop pupils' limited vocabulary in a structured way or by introducing subject-specific language, for example, in science, and this good practice should be extended. Only a few pupils reach the expected standard by the time they are seven.
75. The school promotes pupils' interest in books from the moment they enter the Nursery. Three-year-olds begin the day by looking at books for a few minutes and take books home to share with someone. All children have an individual, carefully graded reading book, which they are encouraged to take home, and which is changed regularly. Pupils read to their teachers individually, and in groups and guided reading sessions during the literacy hour. Shared reading in the literacy hour, when all pupils engage in a teacher-led session with a book, is having a positive impact on standards. However, although the teaching of reading is satisfactory, overall, some weaknesses do exist. Pupils do not always think about or understand what they have read. This is because, at times, when the teacher works with a group, the opportunity is not often taken to explore the meaning of the text by more careful questioning, making predictions, and referring to what has already occurred. The ability to use letter blends and initial sounds is under developed for the age of the pupils. Additional emphasis should be placed on the teaching of phonics, enabling pupils to have more effective strategies for decoding text and building up new words. It is also unfortunate that some home-school reading records are not as well used as they might be, because pupils clearly benefit when teachers and parents exchange information about the child's progress.
76. Standards in writing are below average. In the literacy hour, the emphasis has been predominantly on reading, to such an extent that writing skills are not being developed well enough. The time available for pupils to write is often too short, so that very little of length and quality is achieved. Pupils' writing abilities do not progress as evenly and as rapidly as they should. The amount and range of written work produced over time is very limited. As they move towards the end of the key stage only the most able pupils can communicate ideas in short sections, usually without punctuation, and with only some simple common words spelt correctly. Handwriting and presentation are below average. Some pupils try hard but do not often form letters correctly, and capital and lower case letters are mixed within words. There is also a lack of pride in the presentation of work among a significant number, because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and sometimes good, although there are some weaknesses in the teaching of writing, and opportunities to develop speaking skills are being missed. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, working together in each year group and using the Literacy Strategy framework as the basis of their teaching. They promote enjoyment of books by

creating an appropriate atmosphere, such as low lighting during a reading of 'The dark, dark wood', and by using carefully chosen visual aids to enhance a reading of a non-fiction text about old and new toys. Weekly plans detail activities for sharing texts, developing spelling and grammar, and for a good range of different group activities. Clear objectives are generally but not always stated clearly and plenary sessions are not, therefore, as effective as they might be in assessing whether what was intended has actually been learned. Teachers do not always have the help of a classroom assistant during the literacy hour and, as a result, it is difficult for them to ensure that all groups are appropriately engaged in their tasks. Some pupils are confused by teachers' instructions and more care should be taken to ensure that tasks are fully understood and that time is not wasted. The pace of lessons is satisfactory, overall, although the expectations of what some pupils can do are not always high enough. Overuse of praise sometimes leads to pupils' evaluation of what they can achieve being too low and, where this occurs, some pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Most work hard when well-supervised but many merely do what they have to do, rather than show an excitement about learning.

78. Although displays are colourful and stimulating, in a few classes too little is done to provide a 'word environment' that promotes literacy. In these rooms, there are too few charts showing alphabetical order, word lists or labels, at a height that is appropriate for the age of the pupils. In one class, pupils were encouraged to use information around the walls to help them with spellings, thus promoting independence. Library skills are under developed, although the school has plans to address this.
79. Appropriate assessment procedures are being developed. Samples of pupils' written work are retained but these do not indicate the level at which the pupil was working, nor is there a portfolio of assessed work to assist teachers in their judgement of overall standards. This weakness should be addressed because teachers' expectations may be related to some misunderstanding about the standards that ought to be achieved. Detailed analysis of National Curriculum tests results is being developed well using a computer program. This will enable individual progress to be tracked and results for particular groups to be analysed. Such analysis is already helping the school to identify and address any weakness in curriculum planning.
80. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The headteacher is acting as co-ordinator and has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision for learning in English. She has begun to develop an appropriate plan of action to improve teaching and learning in the subject. There are adequate stocks of books for shared, group and individual reading, with an appropriate balance of fiction and non-fiction texts. The library is predominantly a resource area at present and classes visit it for a brief period each week with their class teacher. More could be done to promote reference skills or to encourage independent learning, particularly among higher-attaining pupils. All classes have equipment to assist with whole-class teaching, such as bookstands and magnetic boards.

MATHEMATICS

81. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in mathematics for seven-year-olds were well below the national average. A very small proportion of pupils attained the higher levels. Pupils' results were broadly average when compared with those from similar social areas. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of work undertaken during the current school year indicate that the current cohort of Year 2 pupils have made good, and in some cases, very good progress from a low level of attainment on entry to the school. The majority is on course to attain standards broadly equivalent to those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. This improving picture is confirmed by the provisional results for 2000, which indicate that pupils' attainment in mathematics is above-average when compared with similar schools. This is also confirmed by the current inspection, namely that standards in mathematics are now broadly the same as the national average. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
82. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well. The pupils undertake a wide range of work in all areas of mathematics. Samples of work demonstrate that pupils have undertaken an appropriate variety of tasks involving shape, space and measures, and tackled a range of problems involving handling data and investigation. In time most make good progress in much of their mathematical work. Pupils also make good use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas, such as science and design and technology.
83. Although attainment in Year 1 is only approaching the expected levels for pupils of that age, this

constitutes generally good progress in relation to pupils' level of attainment on entry to the school. The majority of Year 1 pupils know the number names, recognise them and are able to say them forwards and backwards in order to and from 20. Most are able to count on in sequence in two's and ten's. While a minority is able to count confidently on in two's from any given number, a significant minority needs adult support in counting in sequence to ten. Most pupils understand the process of addition and use related vocabulary satisfactorily, understanding plus and minus and equals in a written question or equation. Most understand that more than two numbers can be added together by the use of mental or practical application, using mathematical equipment. By the end of the Key Stage, pupils' attainment is generally satisfactory for the age of the pupils. Most pupils in Year 2 understand that halves are equal shares and recognise one half of a total shape. Pupils know the number names and most show them quickly and accurately on "flip-boards" up to 50. They recognise addition doubles and a minority of pupils understands that they can work out doubles by counting on in two's.

84. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons observed ranges from very good to satisfactory and is satisfactory, overall. Where the quality of learning is very good, as in one Year 1 lesson, this was mainly due to the teacher's detailed planning, the maintenance of a brisk pace throughout the lesson, high expectations of work and behaviour and the generation of a very good working atmosphere within the class. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for appropriately in teachers planning. With suitable tasks and additional support the pupils make good progress, overall, towards the targets set for them.
85. Planning for all mathematics lessons seen was based on the recommended numeracy scheme of work and complied with the recommended lesson format. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are paying appropriate attention, use correct mathematical vocabulary and that there are good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and to practise what they know. Where teaching was very good, the teacher motivated the pupils very well with her own enthusiasm for the subject and was constantly aware of pupils' progress and levels of understanding, varying teaching methods to take account of their needs. However, in some lessons, after an effective and well-paced introductory activity, teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour during independent tasks were too low, resulting in a reduced rate of progress during the second half of the lesson.
86. Pupils' attitudes towards the subject and their behaviour vary, but are satisfactory, overall. Although most pupils enjoy their mathematics work, particularly the mental and oral activities, many are slow to respond to their teachers and, in a significant number of cases, require constant intervention by the teacher in order to give of their best and to make satisfactory progress during the lesson.
87. The school has implemented the Numeracy Strategy enthusiastically and effectively. The co-ordinator has analysed annual standardised results carefully, identifying problems and providing teachers with strategies to overcome these. Resources for the subject are good. The school now has a good range of appropriate additional resources to support the numeracy strategy, such as tens and units flip books for quick mental/oral activity. These are used well by staff and pupils.

SCIENCE

88. The results of the 1999 teacher assessments indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in science for their age is broadly in line with the national average. However, the school's results are well below average in relation to the proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels. Pupils did well in relation to their knowledge and understanding of life and living processes but there were shortcomings in relation to their work on materials and their properties. There has been a particularly good rise in standards relating to experimental and investigative science and because of this and other improvements, the subject is stronger now than was reported during the last inspection. This has been borne out by the results of teacher assessments for 2000. This inspection confirmed that, while standards remain below average, overall, pupils make mainly good progress and standards continue to rise as their investigative skills are developed.
89. The recent emphasis on investigative science is paying dividends and helping to strengthen pupils' attainment. Pupils show satisfactory knowledge of a good range of topics, such as the human body, living and non-living things and awareness of their senses, but often fail to carry out science enquiries with accuracy and conviction. Much of their previous knowledge was gained from worksheets and merely asked for a limited response to the topics they were learning about, often in a superficial manner. Currently, their work is more experimental and involves them in making

predictions, evaluating results and explaining why things happen as they do. This may mean that pupils appear to get through less work but the quality of their understanding has increased.

90. The two major science topics for the current term, light and sound, have been well practised and understood. Year 1 pupils study a range of musical instruments and lay them accurately into sets depending on how their basic sound is created. Pupils struggle to use and write some of the associated vocabulary, such as 'pluck' and 'vibrate,' but can accurately group similar instruments together according to their source of sound. However, their recording skills are weak and depend heavily on the intervention and support of the teacher. Year 2 pupils show broadly average knowledge of light sources but, here again, their use of technical language and general recording skills are relatively poor. However, the great majority shows increasing awareness of the need for careful and fair testing and pupils know that they should try to predict outcomes based on their previous knowledge and experiences. Pupils accurately predict which source of light, a torch, lamp or candle, will lead to the most effective light for reading in the classroom.
91. During the year, pupils cover an adequate range of topics, some of which, like light, form major themes for whole-school projects. Past work indicates at least satisfactory and often good progress in relation to the work on the five senses, the human body and salt in the home and in the sea. Their work on materials is less thorough and is covered rather superficially.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Teachers show renewed confidence with the subject and plan for it well, ensuring that pupils learn basic skills at the right time and that their knowledge and understanding are well-consolidated before moving on to new topics. The subject almost always has a practical basis to it and teachers ensure that pupils approach their learning in a systematic way, with due emphasis on accuracy as well as enjoyment. This is a successful blend, as the response of pupils to science is consistently good and thorough. Pupils work well in pairs or small groups and take turns sensibly, handling delicate equipment with care. They are also prepared to spend time discussing work and recording their results, rather than merely rushing through the practical aspects. Teachers do their best to introduce pupils to good scientific vocabulary, although more careful thought is needed as to how this can be done if significant numbers of pupils are to use it as a matter of course.
93. Science lessons are generally well managed and proceed at a good pace, although a minority of lessons tail off towards the end, resulting in some loss of standard and pupils being unable to complete their work. Most lessons use easily handled, attractive resources that make pupils want to experiment and learn for themselves. Although investigative work is very teacher-directed, there are good signs that pupils learn from their past experiences and begin to make their own suggestions how particular theories can be tested and observed. The emphasis on pupils' recording skills is too limited at present and this is an area for future development. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in relation to their previous learning and, although some are inhibited at the recording stage, most have few problems with their investigative work and, through careful questioning, can explain their findings.
94. Owing to relatively weak management of the subject in the past, the school has approached an experienced adviser for science and she is currently acting as support co-ordinator for the subject. This is already proving an effective measure as standards of investigative science have risen considerably in a relatively short time. She has also rightly targeted the higher attainers in science and this, too, is appropriate as such pupils are beginning to receive more challenging work for science. Assessments are being carried through in a more systematic way and the co-ordinator has a good feel as to where science is at and how the needs of the subject will be met in the future. The current scheme and supporting documentation for the subject are good, as is the quality and use made of learning resources. The use of information technology needs to be extended as more computer software becomes available to support the subject.

ART

95. Pupils' attainment in art at the end of the key stage is above national expectations for their age and most make good progress as they move through the school. Although only two art lessons were observed during the inspection, a survey of work undertaken during the current school year and on display around the school confirms that attainment, at the end of Key Stage 1, is above expectations. The amount of work displayed very effectively in classrooms and around the school suggests that a good range of work in a variety of medium is planned at an appropriate level for

each year group. Pupils have sufficient and appropriate opportunities, for example, to develop an understanding of artists' work and apply it to their own.

96. In Year 1, pupils are developing their understanding of visual elements in the work of artists from different times and cultures. In the two lessons seen, pupils were looking carefully at a print of a painting of a wave by the Nineteenth Century Japanese artist, Hokusai, considering colour, shape, space in the picture. When colour-mixing, pupils know that when you add white you make a colour lighter and they are developing their colour-mixing skills and understanding appropriately. All pupils at Key Stage 1 have their own sketch-books and Year 1 pupils made careful observational drawings of musical instruments in the lesson observed. In Year 2, pupils make Divas out of clay as part of their work on Divali and use a variety of tools and implements to make indentations in the clay. They know that water dries out of clay and it goes hard and that clay comes out of the ground. Pupils explore the possibilities of a variety of materials and try out tools and techniques.
97. Pupils' response to art activities is variable, but is satisfactory, overall. Although most pupils enjoy their art lessons, attitudes and behaviour were sometimes judged to be unsatisfactory because pupils required repeated and quite firm admonishment from their teacher to complete their work to the expected standard. Teaching in both lessons observed was satisfactory. Teachers demonstrated satisfactory subject knowledge, they resourced lessons well and worked hard to motivate pupils and maintain their concentration, encouraging them to evaluate their work while in progress.
98. The headteacher is currently acting as co-ordinator for the subject, following the departure of the previous co-ordinator and pending the appointment of a new subject leader in the new year. For these reasons, the scheme of work for the subject is in a transition period. The school is currently adopting and trialling an established scheme of work for the subject. Resources are of good quality, are well used and are readily accessible to teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. It was not possible to make a firm judgement on pupils' standards in the subject as little was available from either direct observation or from scrutiny of past work. However, the subject is clearly planned for: the plans are developmental in nature, suggesting that, over time, pupils make satisfactory progress. A current weakness is that the subject is too easily confused and merged with art, resulting in some lack of coverage of the basic skills of planning and evaluating in particular. Standards and provision are broadly at the level reported during the last inspection.
100. Parts of the subject are explored in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2 study the components of a torch as part of their science topic in light. They use a few technical words but these are few and far between. Their knowledge of basic circuits allows them to assemble simple torches in the correct order. Standards of other forms of assembling and making were broadly average in the few examples seen. Pupils in Year 1 cut paper correctly on a fold and know the right amount of glue to use when assembling their paper models. Some of the work described as design and technology is in fact more like art, as much of it lacks previous design and is produced by pupils in a very similar way, giving limited experience in individual choice of materials and methods of working.
101. A few pupils can disassemble small commercial containers as a means of understanding how a box is made, including its strong areas. They then make their own cuboids as part of a mathematics lesson on shapes. Most pupils have the opportunity to experiment with food technology, mainly as part of their studies on cultural and multicultural themes. Teachers' files show that some very specific design and technology work is planned for in the weeks following inspection. Pupils are being asked to design a school logo, at least one of which will be produced commercially, and a major carnival is being planned for involving the designing and making of costumes.
102. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in the few observed lessons. In a Year 2 lesson on components, the teacher used good quality resources and ensured that pupils had time to investigate for themselves and consolidate their previous knowledge and understanding as to how a torch works. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher laid good emphasis on folding and cutting techniques, making satisfactory use of pupils' examples of work. A final plenary period allowed pupils to evaluate their work and that of others. Only a little progress was made in terms of understanding how similar pieces of work could be improved in the future. Levels of teachers' knowledge and

understanding appear to be very uneven, with only a minority planning at the right level to ensure that there is progressive learning over a period of time. The use of support staff and resources is good, overall, but the assessments that are subsequently collated and acted upon are unsatisfactory.

103. The co-ordinator is experienced but has a substantial workload in other areas of the curriculum and has been unable to raise the profile of the subject. However, future priorities in the subject are well documented, and more specific times for the development of pupils' skills have been created within the timetable. While a policy and a scheme exist, these do not always reflect current practice and are rightly to be reviewed in order to provide better support to staff and pupils. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

104. The previous inspection found that pupils' progress in geography was satisfactory and that standards were in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Not enough evidence was available during the inspection to make a secure judgement about standards. Only two lessons were seen, very little written evidence was available and curriculum planning is in its early stages.
105. During this academic year the main focus for geography in Year 2, and to a lesser extent in Year 1, is upon the route and ports of call of the 'Liverpool Clipper' as it travels around the world. The pupils are familiar with one of the skippers and he is writing informative letters to them about the places he visits. This 'living' topic is proving of considerable interest to pupils. They are learning to locate countries on a world map and are making valuable comparisons between their own locality and the countries visited by the Clipper. During the year, pupils' horizons will be broadened further by visits from local groups, such as an African Drum workshop, that are linked to the places the Liverpool Clipper will visit.
106. In colourful displays around the school there are indications of good development of awareness of local surroundings. There are photographs of places outside and inside the school buildings, and of the local area. Landmarks of Liverpool, illustrated by drawings and photographs, are displayed with pointers to their locations on a large scale map of the town. This is well used by the pupils.
107. Planning for the full implementation of the revised National Curriculum is in its early stages and includes use of the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority's guidance. The curriculum for the year is being developed as the planning for each term is completed. It does not take into account sufficiently the need to develop geographical skills progressively, so that pupils' learning is based securely on previous experience. In developing the curriculum further, and to comply with Curriculum 2000, it will be necessary to incorporate a progressive development of geographical skills and to decide which localities to focus upon in some depth.
108. Maps of the world are prominently displayed in classrooms and around the school and are used in relation to the Liverpool Clipper's voyage. Globes are also available. The maps and globes are too small for demonstrations to the whole class and few atlases are available for pupils' use, hindering progress. Book and photographic resources are rather limited. This lack of appropriate resources is having some adverse impact on learning and, therefore, the range of resources should be extended once decisions have been made about the content of the revised geography curriculum.

HISTORY

109. Two history lessons were seen during the week of inspection. Based on observations of these lessons and examples of pupils work in books, folders and on display in classrooms and around the school, it can be judged that pupils' attainment in history is broadly what is expected for their age. Most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
110. Both history lessons observed were in Year 2, and both covered the same subject, namely, 'The Great Fire of London.' Pupils learn about events from the history of Britain and gain an understanding of people's way of life in the more distant past and the lives of notable men and women of their times. Pupils know that Guy Fawkes tried to burn down the Houses of Parliament, and that he lived a long time ago. They have a growing sense of chronology. They know that

people in Seventeenth Century London threw their rubbish out into the streets and that houses of that day were made of wood. They know that one of the reasons that the fire spread so quickly was because the buildings were too close together and that the cause of the fire was the bakery in Pudding Lane.

111. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the history lessons observed were good in one and satisfactory in the other. In both lessons, pupils were interested and well-motivated by the story of the Great Fire, although in one class, pupils' response to the work that followed the story was less positive. The quality of teaching in both lessons was satisfactory. Teachers make good links to previous work and other subject areas. They read the story well, pausing to question and extend pupils' learning and motivating pupils well.
112. The headteacher is currently taking on the role of subject leader for the subject. The school has a nationally recommended scheme of work for history. The schools history resources are satisfactory for the current range of topics taught.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards in information technology (IT) are broadly at the level expected for the age of the pupils and most make good progress, overall. Three whole-class lessons in the new "IT suite" were observed during the inspection. In addition to this, a small number of sessions were observed where pupils were working at the computer, usually in pairs. Samples of on-screen work and print-outs of displayed work around the school were also scrutinised, providing sufficient evidence to indicate that attainment in information technology is generally satisfactory at the end of the key stage and that pupils make good progress in the subject as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately in information technology.
114. In one lesson observed, one half of the class were working in the IT Suite, making patterns of coloured shapes. They know the terms mouse, click and drag and how to make text larger or smaller by use of the appropriate keys. They know how to discard unwanted information and how to place something into the recycle bin. They use the mouse confidently to make something happen and to reposition items on screen. The attainment of the pupils observed was good for their age. This contrasts with older pupils at Key Stage 1 whose attainment is only just satisfactory, indicating that the recent provision of the very good resources has already had a positive effect on the very youngest pupils. There is now the need to ensure that all pupils receive access to the latest technology to ensure a correspondingly positive effect on pupils' attainment as they move through the school. In Year 2, pupils using a CD-Rom index and menus to find information and articles based on their science topic of light know how to open a folder by double-clicking and how to print out their work. They are finding things out by retrieving stored information and exploring a range of IT tools. They demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the computer keyboard and the main functions of the delete, space bar, return and caps lock keys.
115. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to satisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. Where teaching was good, the specialist teacher, who is also the school's IT co-ordinator, demonstrated very good subject knowledge and was clearly very enthusiastic about the subject. She used and expected pupils to use appropriate subject-vocabulary and had appropriately high expectations of pupils. Pupils response to working at the computers in lessons, and the quality of learning during these activities, was satisfactory, overall. Although, in most cases pupils are motivated to work together well, take turns and work independently when required, a significant minority find it difficult to concentrate without constant teacher intervention or supervision.
116. The co-ordinator for the subject is well-qualified and enthusiastic and provides good leadership for the subject. The government-recommended scheme of work for the subject has been adopted and the units of work are being introduced throughout the school. The schools IT resources have, during the months before the inspection, improved significantly and the school now has an excellent resource in its well-equipped computer suite, allowing full-class teaching with a ratio of pupils to computers of, at most, 2:1. These excellent new resources are beginning to have an impact on both pupils' and teachers' skills and confidence. The improved resources and the opportunities they provide for regular "hands-on" experience is beginning to make a significant impact on pupils' attainment as they move through the school. Much has yet to be done to ensure that new resource is used in the most efficient way. At the time of the inspection, however, the computer suite was not being used as effectively as it could be; it was not being used at all in the mornings and for much of

the afternoon on some days. However, the school had, just before the inspection, taken delivery of an interactive light board with which it is hoped, after appropriate training for staff, to undertake literacy lessons in the computer room. Some timetabled lessons, of one hour's duration, are too long to maintain pupils' interest. The additional classroom support for teachers during whole-class lessons is not always sufficient to respond effectively or promptly to all the requests for assistance, leading to some inappropriate behaviour and lack of progress in a number of cases.

MUSIC

117. At the time of the last inspection, standards were considered to be in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Evidence from this inspection is taken from observation of three lessons and from a whole-school assembly; it indicates a similar picture of attainment, with pupils making satisfactory progress, overall.
118. Pupils in Year 1 recognise and join in with the beat of taped music. They can do this effectively when clapping and also when instruments are used by a group of pupils at a time. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils develop their understanding of pitch by responding appropriately to instructions to sing high or low notes. Singing is a particular strength. Pupils sing tunefully in year group lessons and during assembly have a good sense of rhythm, joining in with obvious enthusiasm. They are keen to help accompany the singing by using various instruments to maintain the tempo or improve the dynamics. A school musical performance is held at least once a year and the Gospel Choir, which was not heard during the inspection, performs locally.
119. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. Lessons are well planned and include appropriate objectives that most pupils achieve. A weakness in some observed lessons was a lack of pace, so that pupils' enthusiasm for making music was not used as effectively as it might have been in order to increase levels of progress. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject which could be built upon more effectively in order to raise attainment. Praise is sometimes overused, with the result that there is a lack of challenge to spur pupils to greater efforts.
120. The policy has been recently revised and provides helpful advice, particularly for the non-specialist music teacher, and includes year group lists of listening music. Resources for the subject are good, well; cared for and easily accessible. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject and is able to advise other teachers. She takes an active part in the planning process in all year groups, ensuring that curricular coverage is appropriate. Monitoring teaching and learning in other classes has not yet been part of her role.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Standards in the subject are broadly at the level of age-related expectations and reflect satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. The quality of dance was judged to be a strength of the subject on that occasion, but, because of the illness of the specialist teacher, it was not possible to evaluate achievements in dance at the present time. This aspect continues to be well planned for in the longer term.
122. A good balanced programme for physical education is available to all pupils. Standards in minor games, movement and basic gymnastics were judged to be at the right level for the age of the pupils at this stage of the term. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory awareness of the impact of healthy exercise on their bodies and pay sound attention to the importance of warming up and cooling down. Their use of space and how to improve techniques is satisfactory. In a sound Year 2 lesson, on developing a knowledge of minor games, pupils showed good awareness of the importance of rules and were able to modify their approach to small competitive games accordingly. One pupil introduced his own game successfully to the class and his peers responded well to the rules governing competitive play.
123. Standards of movement, including balance and shape work, are at the level expected for the age of the pupils. Most build up short sequences satisfactorily and know how to express basic moods, such as happiness and sadness, with their own bodies. Eye and hand co-ordination is satisfactory as seen when Year 1 and Year 2 pupils became involved in throwing and catching beanbags and large balls. Most pupils use the available apparatus imaginatively and work together satisfactorily in pairs or small groups. A few show good levels of self-evaluation and are able to improve their work following support from the teacher or their friends.

124. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers show good subject knowledge and lessons are well-structured and soundly managed. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching and improvement of pupils' basic skills and this is reflected in the results of lessons, in which most pupils progress well and develop the confidence and opportunities to try out new things. Teachers are careful to keep pupils fully active and, apart from one lesson where queues developed during team games, are successful in producing a good pace of learning. The aims of lessons could be usefully shared with pupils at the onset of sessions as this, on a few occasions, gives pupils greater self-knowledge of their own learning.
125. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into class learning and also make good progress overall. The good use of time and resources was a common feature of several observed lessons. Pupils enjoy their work and respond enthusiastically. A minority shows poor self-control and where this occurs, the teacher handles the situation well, usually by introducing short periods of 'time out' for the offending pupils. Staff and pupils dress very well and safely for physical activities: teachers' important and high expectations in this respect are carefully observed.
126. The acting co-ordinator for physical education does well to keep track of the subject but finds it difficult to assess the overall quality of pupils' standards as well as the quality of teaching and learning. Subject guidelines are in need of revision. The indoor accommodation for the subject is very good and the outdoor resource is satisfactory. Statutory requirements for the subject are met. Resources for indoor work are satisfactory but the school lacks sufficient small equipment for both indoor and outdoor use and this affects the range of activities pupils can undertake.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. Standards in religious education conform to those of the locally agreed syllabus and are broadly at the level expected for the age of the pupils. Most pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the year. Standards and provision are at the level reported during the last inspection.
128. Enough time is set aside for pupils to develop a satisfactory understanding of religious principles, together with a secure knowledge of an appropriate range of topics. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about the Bible and understand that its two parts are very different in character. They show average familiarity with stories such as Jonah and the Whale and the giving of the Ten Commandments. They retain sound knowledge of the Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas and know the structure of the Lord's prayer. When writing about their own school's harvest festival, most record God's goodness and that that His love is reflected in nature.
129. Much of the pupils' attainment and learning is reflected in class discussions rather than in note-taking or even worksheets. This is a very acceptable way of working but few pupils have strengths in spoken language and many are rather reticent in participating in oral work in the usual way. Some topics, such as the study of Diwali and the celebration of Hanukkah, lend themselves to wider illustration and pupils combine their work well with art and design technology.
130. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers are largely confident in their teaching, even when introducing relatively complex topics such as Judaism and the Torah. Satisfactory use is made of artefacts, pictures and, whenever possible, visits and visitors, to help extend and enrich pupils' learning. The basis for learning about different faiths is good, in this respect. There are frequently also good links made between worship and current religious topics, although opportunities for reflection and spiritual development are frequently missed. Planning for religious education is generally thorough and, where they are not too contrived, sensible links are made with other areas of the curriculum. Although pupils enjoy the subject, overall, their general enthusiasm for written work in particular is somewhat muted.
131. The curriculum meets the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus but in its present form is a little fragmented, giving pupils a quick, rounded view of several topics, but without studying much in depth. The co-ordinator is experienced and exerts a good influence on the subject. She reviews planning and makes suggestions to colleagues for subject development and for raising the awareness and interests of the pupils. Resources are satisfactory. No formal assessment of standards and coverage is in use. The subject is well used to develop the school's aims, particularly the notion of the importance of the individual as a unique human being. As well as adding to some aspects of spiritual development, it also contributes to the wider school ethos and to the moral and

cultural awareness of the pupils.