

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WOODBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bury

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105292

Headteacher: Mr J E Wood

Reporting inspector: Mr L Garner  
25507

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> June – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2001

Inspection number: 181951

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brandlesholme Road Bury
Postcode:	BL8 1AX
Telephone number:	0161 761 1253
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr J Smith
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> April 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25507	Mr L Garner	Registered Inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9970	Mr J Acaster	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23887	Mr P Nettleship	Team Inspector	English History Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30590	Mr P Tuttle	Team Inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs	
30128	Ms S Stanley	Team Inspector	Geography Music Religious education	

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# REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Woodbank is an average sized primary school which serves a mixed community from privately owned and rented accommodation. At the time of the inspection there were 298 pupils on roll, 143 girls and 155 boys.

Most pupils now begin school in the recently established nursery class and then move on to the reception class. When they start nursery or enter reception their achievement is broadly typical for children of their age.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (22%) is slightly higher than the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (21%) is in line with the national average. However, the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs, signifying more serious learning or behaviour problems, is higher than that seen nationally.

Just over three per cent of pupils have English as an additional language, but all are confident English speakers.

The school has successfully come through a period of considerable difficulties. Firstly, the closure of a neighbouring school meant that a considerable number of its pupils and teachers were brought into the school community. Secondly, extensive building work to extend the school has meant that children have been taught in less than ideal conditions. Thirdly, the absence through illness of a senior teacher has meant that the newly appointed deputy headteacher has not yet been able to fully take on his management role.

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

This is a good school with a number of very good features. The headteacher, staff and governors have shown a commitment to maintaining high standards despite the many changes and difficulties of the last year. The school is very well led, teaching is good and pupils are learning well. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Attainment in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds has been above, or well above, the national average for the past four years.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. It is very good in the nursery and reception classes so children get a good start to their education.
- The headteacher leads the school very well and gets good support from governors and staff.
- Pupils respond well to the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have good attitudes to school and generally behave well.
- The school is an 'open', welcoming community and this has enabled it to admit many pupils and their teachers during the last year and still maintain its very good ethos.
- The school is highly regarded by parents and carers and the local community.

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

- Standards in some foundation subjects such as history and geography.
- Provision of policies and schemes of work for some subjects.
- Further development of pupils' investigation skills, particularly in science.
- The quality of the reference library so that individuals, groups and classes can improve their skills to become independent learners.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in April 1996. All the key issues identified for action have been addressed:

- standards in information and communication technology have improved in both key stages, even though standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are still below expectations;
- schemes of work had been implemented, but because of recent national initiatives, new schemes are now being completed;
- the role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened and they now provide good leadership;
- accommodation has been improved by the building of new classrooms although resources in many subjects remain only adequate;
- high standards have been maintained in English and mathematics.

Good progress has also been made in areas which were not identified as key issues. A nursery has been established which gives pre-school children a good start to their education. The quality of teaching seen is better than it was. Curricular planning is more focused. High standards of leadership and management have been maintained. Weaknesses identified in the last report in pupils' referencing skills have not been sufficiently improved.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	C	A	A	well above average A
Mathematics	B	B	B	B	above average B
Science	A	C	C	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The table shows that in 2000 the eleven-year-olds performed well above the national average in English and above average in mathematics. Results in science matched the national average. Results were the same when compared with similar schools.

The present Year 6 pupils are not achieving these standards. This is because this particular year group contains an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, standards being achieved by the other year groups in Key Stage 2 suggest that standards overall are in line with those of last year's Year 6.

Pupils' results in the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds were above the national average in reading and mathematics and matched the national standard in writing. The present Year 2 pupils are working to a similar standard. Pupils in the Foundation Stage, in nursery and the reception class, generally achieve the Early Learning Goals expected.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils want to do well, they nearly all work hard in lessons and many attend extra-curricular clubs.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; the vast majority of pupils are well behaved and the school is an orderly community.
Personal development and relationships	Good; relationships between pupils and teachers and amongst pupils are positive. Pupils usually respect others and are sensitive to their feelings and beliefs. Pupils generally co-operate well when working in pairs or groups.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of the 75 lessons seen during the inspection; only two per cent was unsatisfactory. In 81 per cent of lessons the quality of teaching was good or better, and in a quarter of lessons seen teaching was very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. Teaching of art and design is consistently good. In some subjects, such as music, not all teachers have the subject knowledge to produce high quality teaching, and in history and geography the tasks given to pupils, in particular in Key Stage 2, do not sufficiently challenge them. The proportion of high quality teaching was greatest in the nursery and reception classes so that pupils get a good start to their education. Most work set was well matched to pupils' needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall; the curriculum meets statutory requirements and pupils have equal access to the opportunities the school provides. There are strengths in the provision for children under five, extra-curricular activities, English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and individual or group plans clearly outline learning objectives. Pupils with statements of special educational needs have clear targets which are regularly reviewed.
Provision for pupils	The small number of pupils who have English as a second

with English as an additional language	language are confident readers and speakers and make the same good progress as other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is very good. This helps pupils to develop the good attitudes, good behaviour and sense of responsibility which underpins their learning. Provision for pupils' cultural and moral development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know their pupils well and are committed to their well being. The school's ethos and positive relationships ensure effective personal and academic support. Assessment is used well in English and mathematics although little assessment is made of pupils' work in other subjects such as history and geography.

The school has established a very good partnership with parents. The information provided and communications between home and school are good.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher has led the school through the recent period of significant change. He has maintained the quality of teaching and learning as his top priorities. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has had to cope with unusual and difficult circumstances. He has already given good support to the school, not least by successfully teaching a large Year 6 class following a colleague's absence. During the past year of disturbance all teachers have willingly taken on extra responsibilities, which has made a good contribution to the way the school has developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is well organised and maintains a good oversight of the work of the school. They are committed to maintaining high standards and have given good support during the year to help manage a rapid increase in pupil numbers and extensive building work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems are in place to monitor teaching. Test results in the core subjects are analysed and used to keep track of pupils' progress. Plans for the school's development are addressed in areas where improvement is needed.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are well directed to appropriate priorities. Resources for learning, although barely satisfactory, are used well. Support staff are used well in classes for younger pupils and those with special educational needs. The principles of best value are soundly applied.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They find the school very approachable.</li><li>• They consider the teaching to be good.</li><li>• Their children are expected to work hard, and are making good progress.</li><li>• Their children are becoming more mature.</li><li>• Their children like school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A few parents felt that extra-curricular activities could be better.</li><li>• A few parents wanted more information about their children's progress.</li></ul>

The response of parents to the questionnaires and at the meeting was positive. Parents are particular pleased with the way in which the school has accepted pupils from the closed school. The inspection team agree with all the parents' positive comments, and feel that the extra-curricular provision is very good and that the information provided for parents is better than that seen in most schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The inspection took place after pupils had taken the end of key stage national tests but before the validated results had been published. Therefore the results published in 2000 are used to show attainment at the end of key stages, and inspection judgements about the achievement of the present pupils are used to compare year groups. However, the school population has changed considerably this year because of the intake of around 100 pupils from a neighbouring school that closed, and comparisons therefore, should be treated with caution.
2. In the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' results in English were well above the national average, mathematics results were above average and science results were in line with the national average. The comparisons with similar schools were the same as the national comparisons. The percentage of pupils achieving higher than expected levels (Level 5) showed the same comparisons with schools nationally. Over the last three years the results in English and mathematics have kept up to, or exceeded, the national trend in improvement. The trend in science however has seen a drop in results from above the national average to now meeting the average. The school recognises that the emphasis on literacy and numeracy recently has meant that their science results have suffered and plan to remedy this in future.
3. In the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds, at the end of Key Stage 1, results showed the pupils achieved above the national average in reading and mathematics and in line with the national average in writing. Again, comparisons with similar schools showed the same pattern.
4. Pupils enter school with levels of attainment generally in line with those expected for children of their age. Therefore, generally throughout the school pupils are learning well and achieving standards better than those achieved by pupils nationally.
5. Initial scrutiny of the 2001 tests, in which national comparisons are not yet available, show a slightly different pattern. The results achieved by the present Year 2 would appear to be similar to last year, and inspection judgements would agree that standards in reading and mathematics are above average. However, results from the present Year 6 are unlikely to be above average standards. This is largely because this year group is not typical of most year groups in school. It contains a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than usual, and although pupils in this year group are generally achieving well, given their prior attainment, many do not reach national expectations in English, mathematics or science.
6. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work show that many year groups are achieving well, and their standards are nearer those shown in the 2000 tests.
7. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and many pupils have a sound knowledge of Christianity and other religions. In information and communication technology the school has recently established a computer suite in which whole-class lessons can be held. This is already having a beneficial effect on standards. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils meet national expectations. However, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are still below

expectations. This is because these pupils have not had as good a start as younger pupils, and also because some of the software programs needed to teach the subject are not yet in place.

8. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum pupils achieve higher than expected standards in art and design and design and technology. This is largely because these subjects are taught well. Standards in physical education meet expectations throughout school. Standards in history, geography and music vary. When music is taught by teachers who have good subject knowledge and confidence, as in Key Stage 1 and the lower part of Key Stage 2, standards are good. However teachers at the upper part of Key Stage 2 have less confidence and standards slip. Standards in history and geography are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, largely because of the lack of challenge in some of the work pupils are given to do.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. Their individual needs are identified at an early stage and programmes prepared to target these needs. The teachers and the assistants give good support to these pupils. The assistants work with individuals or groups of pupils within the class, or through a withdrawal system. These pupils still have access to the full curriculum. There are nine pupils with statements of special educational needs, and all these pupils make good progress towards targets set. The statements are clear, and the provision to meet the requirements of each statement is in place.
10. Higher attaining pupils are generally given suitably challenging work in English and mathematics, and the number of pupils achieving higher than the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2 show this provision is successful. Very able pupils are given individual learning programmes, for example, a very talented mathematician in Year 6 is working at a level usually seen for 14-year-olds in high schools.

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

11. Almost all pupils like their school life. They find the work interesting and enjoy the friendly and encouraging atmosphere. The extensive outdoor playing facilities are particularly appreciated. Many take advantage of the wide variety of activities other than lessons which the school arranges.
12. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. The behaviour of the majority is often very good. In the nursery the children play well together and are prepared to share and wait their turn. In the Foundation Stage pupils are pleased to make choices about their activities and adopt responsible learning attitudes. In many lessons throughout the school most pupils listen and concentrate very well. They try hard and show pride in what they have done. A small minority of pupils find difficulty in maintaining concentration. This problem is accentuated among older pupils, particularly those in the very large Year 6 class, and this can affect the pace and effectiveness of learning. Behaviour outside lessons is often very good. Assemblies are orderly. Pupils were able to relax appropriately and showed lively enthusiasm, without becoming silly, during a very well-produced achievement assembly held during the inspection week. Lunch-time and play-time behaviour is sensible and happy. Pupils often show politeness to visitors and kindness to each other. Poor behaviour is not common but exceptionally there was one justified fixed-term exclusion last year.
13. Relationships within the school are very good. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils. They are open, treating them with consideration and respect and these qualities are returned. Many aspects of the school's work, including

assemblies, cause pupils to consider the values and needs of others. Pupils enjoy co-operating together. Most like the routine opportunities available for helping in school. Those assisting with chairs at lunch-time may be rewarded with one of the school's excellent chocolate biscuits! The school councillors, drawn from Key Stage 2, apply for their positions. Business always includes a feedback by councillors on any occurrences of bullying or of dangers in school. The meeting during the inspection week considered how the professional report for developing the school grounds could be publicised, and what might be done to obtain the necessary resources to carry the scheme out. Councillors made many helpful suggestions. The school fosters good personal development, and parents are pleased by the results.

14. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Levels of unauthorised absence and lateness are low.
15. Pupils with special educational needs generally have good attitudes and respond well to the good support they receive from teachers and support staff. This good response enables them to make good progress towards meeting their individual targets.

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

16. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall, and this is one of the main reasons why pupils achieve high results in many areas.
17. Teaching is particularly strong in the nursery and classes for reception children, and this is why they make such a good start to their learning. The recently established nursery unit in which children make good progress will, from this coming school year, mean that most pupils entering the reception class will have spent time in the nursery, and this must have the effect of further raising standards.
18. During the inspection teaching was at least satisfactory in virtually all the 75 lessons seen, and only one lesson was unsatisfactory. A high proportion of the lessons, 81 per cent, had teaching which was good or better, 24 per cent of lessons had very good teaching and one music lesson was outstanding. Eighty-five per cent of the teaching for the under-fives was good or better with eight out of the 20 lessons having very good teaching. For the pupils in Key Stage 1, (Years 1 and 2) 95 per cent of teaching was good or better, with a quarter being very good. Three-quarters of the lessons for Key Stage 2 pupils had good or better teaching, with 17 per cent being very good. Twenty-two per cent of lessons were judged to be satisfactory which is a higher proportion than the other two key stages.
19. A consistent theme in the good or better lessons was the good, and often very good, class management. This was usually achieved by careful planning so that pupils were quite clear about what they were to do and how they were to behave. The good relationships established between teachers and pupils also helped. Pupils generally behave well but this is because of the mutual respect between pupils and staff. Problems have occurred in the past when temporary teachers have been employed to cover for staff absence. This situation is affecting the teaching of the present Year 6 which has been divided into a large average and above average ability group, taught by the deputy headteacher, and a smaller group with special educational needs taught by a temporary teacher with support staff. This is an arrangement which is the best the school has tried, but is obviously short term and the school expects to return to a more settled arrangement in the new school year.

20. Many lessons are delivered in an imaginative way which captures pupils' interests and enables them to learn effectively. Literacy and numeracy are taught well because of the good support given by the nationally agreed schemes of work.
21. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Approximately a third of all pupils at the school are on the special educational needs register. The teachers identify the needs of the pupils well and prepare individual education plans, setting targets that match the pupils' needs. Support staff and parents help teachers well in this work. There is clear guidance given by the teachers to the conscientious support staff for the work they are to undertake with the pupils.
22. The quality of teaching has improved considerably from that reported in the last report; then ten per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory, and 45 per cent good or better, compared to 81 per cent this time.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good. Areas in which standards are very high are:
  - the range and quality of extra-curricular activities;
  - the contribution which the community makes towards the pupils' learning;
  - the links with other schools, which improve pupils' learning opportunities and ensure good transition from their primary to their secondary education.
24. Since the previous inspection, the information and communication technology curriculum has been improved by the installation of a computer suite. One issue raised then has been addressed, but because of new national initiatives needs to be re-addressed. All new policy documents are not yet fully in place. As a result, some schemes of work are not being consistently implemented. For example, links across different curriculum subjects are not being sufficiently developed.
25. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a curriculum that is very rich in the range and quality of experiences through which they learn. Planning is linked to achieving the Early Learning Goals identified in national policies. Activities are skilfully linked so that each one complements work undertaken in the others. Children in the nursery have insufficient opportunities to develop their physical skills but this is remedied in the reception classes. Children within the mixed reception/Year 1 class receive their full entitlement to the Foundation Stage curriculum.
26. Key Stage 1 pupils also benefit from a good curriculum, well linked to their interests and abilities. At Key Stage 2, the quality and range of learning opportunities are good, but the needs of higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently met in history and geography.
27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through planned curricular provision. Teachers prepare suitable activities in literacy and numeracy lessons as well as targeting the specific needs of pupils in individual or group educational plans. There is one upper junior class with a smaller number of pupils all having special educational needs. Additional classroom support is given to help pupils in all lessons of the planned curriculum.

28. Able pupils identified by the school make good progress within the core subjects of the National Curriculum, and targets are set to extend their knowledge and understanding. The school plans to extend this provision to include the other subjects of the curriculum
29. Good strategies are in place for teaching literacy skills. This is reflected in the improving trends in the annual National Curriculum tests at ages seven and eleven. The literacy hour is very well established and teachers are confident and proficient in its delivery. Speaking, listening and reading skills are well established, though progress in them is not consistent throughout the school. Developing writing skills, at both key stages, has rightly been given high priority in the school improvement plan.
30. Strategies for teaching numeracy skills are also good. Pupils are continuing to develop their mental mathematics skills. The numeracy lessons each day are delivered confidently and the detailed planning associated with the strategy gives teachers good support.
31. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and is a strength of the school. The staff have maintained this high quality provision over 12 months of rapid change. Even when in the throes of building developments and changes to staff and pupils, the maxim, 'The clubs must go on!' has been fully delivered. As well as eight sporting clubs, there are others for music and French. A range of amateur and professional organisations, such as Lancashire Cricket Club and Bury Football Club, also provide high quality coaching. Fencing has recently been added to the list and is well supported. There is a strong commitment to competitive team games for both boys and girls.
32. The equality of access and opportunities for pupils is satisfactory. The school adopts a pro-active style in assessing how inclusive it functions in practice. The headteacher meets with a children's committee every fortnight. They discuss issues, such as how well the pupils are able to play together at lunch-times. A register has been established to cater for the needs of the more able and gifted pupils. Programmes of work have been drawn up to ensure that these pupils are given opportunities to extend their talents in those subjects in which they have a particular strength. However, these same pupils (and others of higher ability) are not extended in some other subjects. For example, in geography and history they receive no extra challenges to their peers. Work set is often well within their capabilities. Consequently, they are unable to achieve above average levels in their understanding and skills in these subjects.
33. Since the last inspection there has been a considerable improvement in the school's provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. Good policies have been introduced and programmes established for drugs awareness, sex education, citizenship, behaviour and racial harassment. Outside agencies, such as the police, fire-service and health services, visit the school on an annual basis to give instruction on specific topics to particular age groups. These policies and studies enable pupils to be well prepared, both for their present and their future. Social awareness is promoted from their earliest experiences in the school. Nursery children develop a strong feeling of belonging to a caring community. This is well developed throughout the school. For example, monthly assemblies are occasions for individual and group rejoicing as a range of achievements are publicly celebrated. Class, house and school loyalties are greatly enhanced by these gatherings. Self-esteem can soar in this environment.

34. There are very strong links with the local community. In addition to those already mentioned, the school has strong ties with other organisations. These include local churches, Bury Chamber of Commerce and senior citizen groups, as well as parents. These links greatly benefit the school. For example:
- clergy from a range of denominations visit for assemblies and appreciate the close links afforded by the school;
  - a scheme to develop boys' reading was funded by the Single Regeneration Budget;
  - senior citizens visit the school for lunch each week and form links with the children;
  - parents (and grandparents) visit the school regularly to help in classes;
  - classrooms have been decorated and equipment maintained by parental support.
- By these links, pupils develop their sense of belonging to a wider community.
35. The school has very constructive links with nearby schools. Links with pre-school groups already exist and are currently being strengthened. Curriculum co-ordinators meet together to share ideas and extend their subject knowledge. Bands from this school entertain at the school summer fair. Local secondary schools express their own appreciation of the close liaison that they have with Woodbank Primary. This enables the Year 6 pupils to benefit from a smooth transition in their education when they finally move on.
36. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
37. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is very effectively provided through assemblies, moments for reflection and prayer at the beginning and end of many sessions. Pupils experience a wonder about the world in some lessons. For example, in one history lesson, pupils listened to the story of Grace Darling. The teacher wore a costume and told the story as though she were Grace. Pupils were captivated by this and were visibly involved in the activities from long ago. After the story pupils continued their involvement with the role play, and said that mother had called them from the lighthouse and that they had been in for tea and were out playing again.
38. Pupils are taught right from wrong in many ways, both formally and through personal and social education lessons when they explore important social and moral dilemmas enabling them to make choices and decisions. This aspect of pupils' moral and social development is also promoted through the way in which staff relate to pupils, correcting behaviour and their attitudes. This is a strong aspect of the school. Another strong aspect of the school is the way in which pupils are encouraged to be sociable with each other. When given the opportunity, they work well in pairs or groups at, for instance, the computers in role play, in physical education games and music practice. They are encouraged to be kind and think of others. They help each other if someone is hurt or upset in the playground.
39. What pupils learn about their own culture is good. They discover and understand much of the heritage of the past and present. The school has improved in its attempt to awaken pupils to the fact that Britain, as a whole, is now a multicultural society. Pupils learn the similarities and differences in Christian, Islam and Jewish ways of

dressing, speaking and celebrating festivals. They are given a good understanding of world religions.

40. Accommodation is overall satisfactory. Learning resources are barely adequate overall. They are unsatisfactory in science. The library is underdeveloped and an under-used resource at present. It does not currently contribute to raising standards or help develop pupils' skills of independent learning.

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

41. The school provides a good standard of care for all its pupils. Beyond the systematic approach expressed through its policies, the headteacher keeps a very vigilant eye on all that happens. Prompt action is taken to remedy defects, such as those that may be reported through the school councillors. All members of staff set good examples, showing interest in and care for their pupils. They know their pupils as individuals, track their academic progress satisfactorily, encourage improvement, and informally give them good educational and personal support. Very good relationships with pupils and with other members of the staff form the basis for the strong sense of community and shared purpose within the school.
42. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good. Parents are told clearly of the importance of regular and prompt attendance. Reminders are given in the newsletters and, as necessary, by word of mouth. Permission is needed for holidays in term time. Parents know it is not granted during the National Curriculum tests and assessments (SATs) examination period. Teachers maintain their attendance registers well, carefully annotating reasons for absence. The headteacher and the educational welfare officer monitor the registers frequently. Attendance is highlighted to pupils at the weekly achievement assembly, celebrating class results and individuals' excellent records.
43. Good behaviour is promoted well. The behaviour and discipline policy clearly outlines the school's expectations. Teachers have freedom to tailor their own classroom arrangements within the school structure of rewards and sanctions. These are generally effective, with classroom management being consistently very well handled within the nursery and Key Stage 1. Oppressive behaviour is not tolerated, and any reported incidents are promptly and effectively addressed.
44. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Child protection procedures follow the local guidelines. Staff are well briefed, and know that any concern must be reported to the designated person, the headteacher. The school's personal, social and health education curriculum is well structured. It includes inputs from various specialists to raise pupils' awareness of such matters as personal safety and healthy lifestyles. Older pupils receive drugs awareness and sex education. The health education caravan visits the school annually. Pupils are usually well supervised at lunch-times. First aid is administered sensitively. Regular checks are made on equipment and emergency systems, and careful risk assessment is ongoing. Much organisation for pupils' safety was needed during the recent building work. Parents were impressed with the standards achieved by the staff. The school has worked hard and successfully throughout the year to ensure that pupils should feel secure and confident in their learning environment.

45. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted on the preparation of individual education plans. They are invited to meetings to review progress made. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs work in close partnership with teachers and outside agencies in supporting their children, and attend annual reviews.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. In the nursery, assessments are made on entry, at the mid-point and at the end of the year. Parents are kept well informed of the children's progress and good records are passed on to the reception class. At present the tests used on entry to the reception class do not provide sufficient information to enable comparisons to be made with other local schools or with children in schools nationally. However, internal assessments are well established and enable the teachers to monitor the progress of children well.
47. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate programmes established. This, together with accurate monitoring, enables them to make good progress. Those with special talents are also identified and appropriate plans are made to extend these pupils in specific subjects. Pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are given half-termly tests in numeracy and literacy to monitor their progress. In other subjects there is no established testing routine, though many teachers have developed their own checking systems. A range of annual tests is given for English and mathematics but these are presently being reviewed. Changes are planned to ensure that the tests are more diagnostic, allowing teachers to make accurate predictions and enabling them to set more appropriate, individual targets. The subject co-ordinators, together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, monitor test results.
48. An issue at the last inspection was to use assessment data more systematically to inform curriculum planning. The school's use of assessment data is now satisfactory. Target setting is still not yet sufficiently established. Baseline assessments (to indicate ability levels on entry to the school) are used to determine the composition of the reception/Year 1 class but they do not provide sufficient information for much wider use. Examples of assessment being used to target particular areas of need include:
- raising the standards of boys' reading (with a course set up and delivered that led to measurable gains being made);
  - raising standards of writing throughout the school (now being delivered but there has not yet been time to measure the impact);
  - individual education plans being established for gifted and talented children (with subsequent high achievements noted in the annual national curriculum tests).
49. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the assessment co-ordinator has been unable to devote as much time to this key area as was planned. As a result, the school has not made the progress that was planned in areas such as establishing procedures for pupils to be involved in their own self-assessments.

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

50. Parents have a high opinion of the school. It attains good results, and maintains high standards. Children enjoy their school life even though they are expected to work hard. Almost all parents believe the teaching to be good. Their children are making good progress and are increasing in maturity. They find the school very approachable, with a real 'open door' policy. It is a happy, welcoming and caring school. Parents are full of praise for the way in which the school has, on all fronts, coped with the problems of

bringing the closed school and Woodbank together. The inspection team agrees with all these complimentary opinions. About one in five parents replying to the inspection questionnaire either did not know, or had reservations about, the range of activities provided outside lessons. The inspection team considers that extra-curricular provision, in particular for pupils in Key Stage 2, is very good.

51. Parents are pleased with the overall information they receive. It is of good quality. The prospectus and governors' annual report are very comprehensive. Copies of all policies and schemes of work are placed on permanent display in the main entrance. Parents of new entrants to the nursery are given an attractive explanatory brochure. Similarly, those in the main school are guided by a handbook. Parents are otherwise kept informed through frequent newsletters and much informal contact with teachers. The value of this liaison has been effectively proved through the unusual circumstances of the school's substantial building works and merger, during which, crucially, day-to-day practical arrangements and morale were well sustained.
52. Parents receive good information about the progress their children make. Parents' evenings to discuss progress are held in the Autumn and Spring terms. Each pupil's work is available for inspection at parents' evenings. There is an option to seek a further meeting in the summer to review the annual written report, but in practice this is rarely found to be necessary since the contents usually come as no surprise. Parents can track their children's progress informally during the term by helping with reading and number work at home and checking homework. Comments can be passed on to the teacher through the reading record book. The school reminded parents at the start of the academic year of the expected homework arrangements. Most parents approve of these but some note that not all teachers apply them consistently. Parents do not, as yet, routinely receive prior information concerning what is to be taught each term which could enable them to plan some relevant contribution towards their children's study.
53. Parents like the annual academic report, and its quality is generally good. In addition to more general remarks concerning attitude, care is taken to indicate to every pupil the National Curriculum level being achieved in the main subjects. A note is also made of what might appropriately constitute the next steps. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly consulted and kept well informed.
54. The school is keen for parents to be involved in school life, and values the comments they make. Parents have in the past been consulted concerning the homework policy, the home-school agreement and the timings of parents' evenings. Parents and grandparents are often invited into school for such events as the annual nativity presentation, and the Easter Bonnet parade. This gives them a good understanding of how these events help their children's development. Parents and grandparents are also invited to help in school. Quite a number do, by hearing readers, helping with art or craft work, or by using specialisms such as knowledge of information and communication technology. They are joined by various volunteers, including former teachers, from the local community. All make a good contribution to pupils' progress.
55. Parents recognise and appreciate the school's desire to strengthen the benefits which can flow from close relationships. The parent-teacher association is flourishing with an active social programme. It provides funds to support the way the school helps pupils to learn. Pupils also benefit from a rota of volunteers who provide mid-morning toast! Parents accompany school visits, and are often providing assistance in the charitable fundraising undertaken by their children. Most parents support their children's work well, and ensure that they arrive in school on time. These, and other activities, mean

than the school and parents are working well together to improve the quality of education provided. The new parent-governors take their role seriously, are involved in school, and are keen to be increasingly effective in contributing to the school's future direction.

56. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's links with parents and carers is very good. Correspondingly, parents and other helpers make a good impact on the work and morale of the school community.

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

57. Overall the leadership and management of the school is very good. The way the school has been brought through this last year of disruption pays tribute to the very high quality of leadership, particularly by the headteacher. He, with good help from governors and staff, managed what in effect was a merger between Woodbank and a closing school. His aim was to blend the two groups of pupils and teachers into one, and in this he has succeeded. The headteacher has managed the school during the period of building work when virtually all classes moved into temporary classrooms or rooms with boarded windows. He has also had to cope with staff illness which has meant class reorganisation. That the staff and pupils have retained their enthusiasm, and sense of humour, is largely due to the headteacher's determination to continue to do the best for all.
58. The headteacher is at the heart of the school, establishing and maintaining its caring atmosphere and aim for high achievement. He is committed to maintaining the high standards achieved and recognises the areas which can be improved. He has a high level of concern for each pupil's well-being. He communicates these values and priorities very well and has succeeded in securing commitment from a hard-working staff.
59. The senior management team makes a good contribution to planning and evaluating change and has given good support to the headteacher in this last year. When a senior teacher was absent from school recently other teachers willingly took on extra responsibilities showing the sense of teamwork which is evident in the school.
60. The deputy headteacher was appointed from the beginning of this school year and has had an unusual first year as a senior manager! He has had to establish himself in the school while helping to negotiate with building contractors, moving classrooms and helping to cover for an absent colleague. His agreement to teach a very large Year 6 class has also added pressure to his workload. However, he has made an impact in school already, particularly in the area of information and communication technology, and when school life returns to a more normal form next year, has the potential to make a good contribution to many other areas of school life.
61. The governing body is supportive of the school and the headteacher and is committed to serving pupils' best interests. Governors are kept well informed of school life through documents from the headteacher and other staff and visits to school. Many governors are also parents of pupils in school. They have well-established committees which deal effectively with their responsibilities. Governors have a clear view of where the strengths of the school are and the areas which need to be developed. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well.
62. There is an appropriate level of teaching and support staff to match the demands of the curriculum. All staff have clear job descriptions, detailing their roles and

responsibilities. They have a full understanding of their roles and those of other colleagues in the teaching and support of pupils.

63. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators, whose role is specifically, 'to monitor and improve standards in the subject throughout the school as a whole'. In the core subjects this role has been successfully met. Other subjects are in earlier stages of development and some co-ordinators have not yet had opportunity to move the subject forward. Provision for induction for new staff at the school is good. Following the closure of a nearby school, four teachers joined the staff in September. These new members of teaching staff and other new assistants have all received good induction support directly from the headteacher or from year co-ordinators.
64. Access to training is good. Specific training needs are identified in the school improvement plan. Training in information and communication technology, through the New Opportunities Fund, has been organised for the start of the new academic year. The school has successfully adopted the performance management structure for teaching staff.
65. The school makes good strategic use of its resources. Financial control is very thorough and effective. The finance committee of the governing body, which includes an accountant, meets on average about a dozen times a year, most frequently during the budget-setting season. Its work is considerably assisted by the reliable projections and outturns provided by the local authority's financial officer. The headteacher has a good strategic grasp for the school's priorities and is very thorough throughout the year in highlighting budgetary variances. Day-to-day financial control is unobtrusive and extremely efficient. The most recent auditor's report was highly complimentary, merely recommending one small improvement. The school's fund is professionally audited.
66. The school has had a financial struggle to meet its needs for several years. Priority is given to maintaining an appropriate number and mix of teaching and support staff. This in itself has been difficult, as evidenced by the marked imbalance of class sizes in Year 6. Teaching and support staff are generally well deployed. Funding for special educational needs is well used in providing a good level of effective support. Standards funding is appropriately used and accounted for. The school benefits from a class size grant to maintain pupil numbers within 30 in Key Stage 1, and from a special grant arranged through the local education authority to sustain its budget. The accommodation, recently enhanced, is well used, with the exception of the library, which is of awkward size and location. The library also suffers from being poorly stocked. With this exception, learning resources, though often barely adequate, are used well.
67. Accommodation is overall satisfactory. Learning resources are barely adequate overall. They are unsatisfactory in science. The library is underdeveloped and an under-used resource at present. It does not currently contribute to raising standards or help develop pupils' skills of independent learning.
68. The planned provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has a good policy that is in line with the recommendations of the special educational needs Code of Practice. There are two co-ordinators working in tandem, one in the infants, one in the juniors. This arrangement is effective and ensures that the recommendations of the Code of Practice are implemented and all the necessary documentation is in place. The co-ordinators give direct support to teachers and this, coupled with the deployment of the support assistants in classes to work with individuals or groups of pupils, ensures pupils are given good support in meeting their

educational targets. Good liaison has been established with specialist teachers, support assistants, outside agencies and parents. Parents comment that special educational needs provision is 'very well organised right through'. A governor has designated oversight of special needs at the school. This governor has experience in teaching and prior management of special needs. The governors annual report to parents gives details of the organisation and provision for special educational needs and meets with requirements.

69. Provision for able pupils, to extend their knowledge and understanding in one or more of the subjects of English, mathematics and science, is good. A co-ordinator for able pupils works closely with teachers to target additional human and material resources to match the needs of these pupils.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

The Governors, headteacher and staff should further improve standards in school by:-

- improving standards in history and geography by:
  - matching work more closely to pupils' abilities in Key Stage 2, thereby providing more challenge;
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to research topics from reference books and computers.
- completing policies and schemes of work for all subjects and linking these with assessment systems which give teachers a clearer picture of what pupils have understood and what skills they have acquired.
- further developing pupils' investigation skills, particularly in science.
- improving the quality and range of books in the reference library so that individuals, groups and classes can acquire the skills which make them more independent learners.

A minor issue identified was the variable quality of the presentation of pupils' work throughout the school. Governors and staff should look at ways to make all pupils' presentation in their written work meet the standards which are achieved in the classes where presentation is of the highest quality.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	24	56	17	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	283
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	61

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	36

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	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
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
	2000	22	13	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	30	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (82)	89 (92)	91 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	31	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (82)	91 (90)	91 (82)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	23	14	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	21	20
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	32	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (72)	89 (79)	89 (85)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (76)	84 (92)	84 (95)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	236
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*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	1	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	24

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	566,775
Total expenditure	562,130
Expenditure per pupil	1,725
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,704
Balance carried forward to next year	12,349

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	322
Number of questionnaires returned	95

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	29	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	34	5	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	48	4	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	47	9	2	3
The teaching is good.	56	38	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	45	13	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	29	9	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	35	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	41	43	13	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	33	7	6	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	42	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	47	12	3	7

## **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**

69. There have been considerable improvements in the provision for children in the early years since the previous inspection. A nursery has given the school an added dimension. The new Foundation Stage curriculum has been very successfully introduced. Teaching standards are very high. Children benefit from a broad range of experiences. Very good provision in the nursery is extended through the reception classes. High quality relationships, between the staff, parents and children are a strong feature. Those who work alongside older pupils from Year 1 receive their full entitlement to the Foundation Stage curriculum. They benefit from working alongside older pupils. There is very good leadership from the head of nursery and the early years co-ordinator. The early years provision establishes very good foundations and is a strength of the school.
70. When children start in the nursery, their knowledge, skills and understanding vary considerably but are generally close to levels expected for their age. This is confirmed by initial tests. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, the vast majority achieve well. They reach the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical skills. High levels of planning ensure that learning is concentrated and varied. In mathematical and creative development, children achieve well to exceed the Early Learning Goals. In their personal, social and emotional development, all children achieve very high standards for their age.

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

71. Many children begin nursery with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception classes, most are exceeding the Early Learning Goals in this area. This reflects the considerable efforts of staff to develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Children are thrilled to gain stickers, to receive 'Wowees!' from the staff and to show others their work. They are regularly encouraged to 'pat their own backs' and to recognise the good work of others. They are given many opportunities to show independence and accept responsibilities. Equipment and resources are easily available to them. They select them confidently and good routines are established for putting things away later. Children in the early years classes are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve.
72. Children play and work well together, whether supervised or not. For example, when designing gardens in the sand tray, they share plastic flowers and wait their turn for the garden tools and watering cans. Adults provide good role models, working closely as a team. Often humour and role play are used to make the learning both fun and more memorable. Positive expectations abound. Consequently children behave well and develop a real feeling of belonging to a caring class community. This is particularly evident at the end of sessions when group work is examined, discussed and applauded.

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

73. There is a wide range of speaking and listening skills by the end of the nursery year. All pupils listen with good concentration to stories and discussions. Some limit their responses to single words, others use extended sentences. They all willingly offer

answers. They show confidence when speaking to others in their group. Many respond well to challenges. For example, four boys were asked by the teacher to change the track design for their train set (to take it away from the door). After 15 minutes of discussion and adaptation, a successful design was agreed. Adults, including regular volunteers, use talk to good effect and are responsive, active listeners. By the end of reception, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals and a significant proportion exceed them.

74. In the nursery, reading is imaginatively introduced. For example, children enjoy spotting their names on cards (to enable them to select today's first activity). A love of books is effectively nurtured through stories read to them. In group activities, children enjoy visiting class libraries to study books and discuss them with friends. By the end of reception, most children have a sound knowledge of their letter sounds and names and use this knowledge successfully to spell simple words. Elements of the literacy framework are well used in both classes with reception children. A good understanding of letter blending is successfully developed.
75. This learning is equally utilised when children produce written work of their own. They are provided with good writing materials to enable them to develop their tracing, pencil control and eventually their letter and word formations. They write for a wide range of purposes that enables them to grasp the potential use of these skills. Many are beginning to write confidently, using capital letters and full stops, when given exercises to complete. Most letters are correctly formed. Practice is regular and well structured.

### **Mathematical development**

76. This area of learning is particularly well taught and, by the end of both nursery and reception, most children achieve standards above those normally seen for their age. Much conversation is directed towards numbers and sequences, with counting introduced early on. Numeracy is exploited well in almost every activity. Children count and match, sequence and combine, measure and compare well. They develop good awareness that numbers, patterns and measures are an integral part of their daily experience. Children enjoy these challenges because they are directly linked to their other learning. Work is well matched to the abilities of children, especially in reception.

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

77. Most children enter the nursery with a basic knowledge of their world and then build successfully on this to gain a better understanding of the place where they live. They identify features of living things such as the roots, stem, leaves and petals of plants. Initial instructions on these features were later reinforced by further discussions when children:
- painted a large sunflower that included all these elements;
  - designed a sand-tray garden and discussed the parts of different plastic flowers;
  - sequenced ten (numbered) petals on their sunflower collages in mathematics;
  - planted sunflower seeds (later they will examine all these features as they develop).
78. Children in reception design and make underwater collages. The activity is teacher-directed, though opportunities for children to be creative are exploited. They select materials and tools that are appropriate to the task. This enables them to cut, weave, stitch and stick materials confidently to produce work of a consistently high quality.

79. Many children arrive with few skills in information and communication technology. These are mainly developed in the reception class. As a result of very thorough, sequenced teaching, children achieve very well and work with confidence and skill. They select programs from the menu, locate, move and colour a range of basic shapes on the screen and write and print with increasing confidence. Many achieve levels beyond the Early Learning Goals. They are well prepared for the National Curriculum work in Year 1.
80. A sense of time is vividly portrayed to older reception children when the teacher wraps herself in a shawl and adopts the character of Grace Darling. She spiritually transports them back into the past to tell them how she became famous. A sense of place is enhanced through trips around the locality and through examining simple maps.

### **Physical development**

81. In the nursery, these lessons are only partially successful. Children develop their hand skills well through many drawing, cutting, building and other manipulative activities. However, they have very few opportunities to extend their whole-body skills, such as climbing, balancing and hanging, or throwing and catching. This is because:
- there is no space on the timetable to enable children to develop these skills on the apparatus in the hall;
  - the outdoor space and equipment available are limited to develop such skills;
  - the outdoor sessions are not sufficiently planned to extend these skills systematically.
82. Other early years classes do extend these skills but children do not develop as rapidly in this area as they do in the other Early Learning Goals.

### **Creative development**

83. This is another area of learning where children exceed the expectations for their ages. They make good progress through the nursery and reception years. In the nursery, they express themselves freely in a range of creative activities. Paint is applied boldly and with precision by many of them. Improvements in their perceptions are compared through analysing figure drawings from the beginning and end of their school year.
84. Songs are regularly linked to other work being undertaken. Nursery rhymes develop from stories, number sequences are learnt via songs, and studies of the seaside are extended through instrumental playing. The enthusiasm in role play and music making has an infectious impact on most children. They perform free of inhibitions.
85. The imagination of the children is regularly extended. The nursery class currently features a Pirates' Treasure Island area. Water wings and goggles enable children to 'swim' there and once ashore they dress and search for the treasure. Maps are drawn and discussed with adults later. In reception, similar role play areas this year have included a launderette, a woodland scene, an ice-cream shop and a hairdressers. Each one stimulated conversations and role play in different ways. A feature of these activities is the extent to which adults participate actively to extend children's creativity.

### **ENGLISH**

86. Standards in English have risen at both key stages since the last inspection. The school has been particularly successful at enabling pupils to reach above average standards in national tests. However, levels of attainment in writing lag behind those in

speaking and listening and reading. Standards this year at the end of Key Stage 2 in Year 6 are not as high as seen previously, mainly because this is not a typical year group for the school. It has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are achieving well, but are unlikely to reach the standards achieved by most pupils of their age.

87. Although standards in Year 6 have dipped this year, test and inspection evidence clearly indicates that in subsequent years these will resume their upward trend. There is good leadership and as a consequence the detailed scheme of work is being delivered consistently well. Pupils are achieving good standards throughout the school compared with their previous attainments.
88. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of speaking and listening reach the levels expected. Pupils listen well to stories and instructions. They develop better listening than speaking skills because some teachers tend to instruct rather than inquire. The use of questions to extend pupils' thinking is a feature of the best English lessons. This leads to higher levels of concentration and a greater willingness to volunteer answers, and higher standards of speaking skills.
89. By the end of Key Stage 2, speaking and listening standards reach expected levels. In some classes, the more reticent speakers are not sufficiently encouraged to contribute to discussions. They fail to develop confidence to express their ideas. However, most pupils listen well and many make thoughtful contributions to discussions. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils offer reasons why they found a text amusing, citing particular words and phrases and discussing their reactions to them.
90. Reading standards of pupils in Year 2 are good. Almost two-thirds of pupils are working at the level expected for their age. The other third are reaching above average standards. This is the result of good teaching of basic skills during the literacy hour. Those who need extra help to learn to read are very well supported. This enables them to make good progress. Pupils learn to use a range of techniques to tackle unknown words. For example, they sound out individual letters, break words into syllables and read the text to look for clues to what the word might say. Pupils are confident when tackling unknown words. Many parents make a significant contribution with the extra reading practice that they give their children at home. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed a commitment to reading and a love of books. For example, in the Year 1/2 class pupils cleverly create a story in the style of Tony Ross. However, little use is made of the infant library and too few opportunities are taken to use books for research.
91. Reading standards of pupils in Year 6 are below those expected because this is not a typical year group for the school. All pupils in the school have a daily silent reading session, and those in need of extra coaching receive good, regular support. Most older pupils have responsibility for their own reading, selecting their books and maintaining their reading records. Skills such as skimming and scanning are introduced but mainly via the overhead projector. There are few opportunities for pupils to extend these skills through actual research using books. The junior library is small, poorly sited and inadequately resourced. Many new books are needed. It is rarely visited by the classes. However, reading standards in most classes in Key Stage 2 meet the national expectations.
92. By the end of Year 2, all pupils reach the expected attainment level in writing, though no pupils reach above average standards. The school has introduced a good programme to address this. Ten months work in pupils' books indicates good

achievement in a range of writing challenges. However, there is a need to provide more structure to some of the tasks and there is insufficient preparation for the introduction of joined-up writing.

93. By the end of Year 6, writing standards are presently not high enough, although in other classes in Key Stage 2 they meet the national expectations. The school has put much analysis and effort into raising standards. In addition to the weaknesses identified by the school, there are presently deficiencies in:
- the development of writing skills throughout the school;
  - the commitment of some teachers to high standards of presentation in pupils' work (standards are noticeably better in those classes where neatness is the norm);
  - the development of writing skills across a broad range of curriculum subjects (so that learning in literacy lessons is given added relevance in many practical situations).
94. The commitment to raising standards means that most classes are achieving results at least in line with the national expectations. This is most noticeable in Years 3 and 4. For example, pupils in Year 4 have both a literacy and a creative book. This ensures that skills developed in the literacy hour are extended through story and other forms of writing. The use of 'writing frames' (which provide a structure in which pupils can produce their work) is increasingly enabling older pupils to produce work of higher quality. Computers are increasingly being used to raise writing skills. They also encourage re-drafting to improve the original work.
95. English is taught well. Thorough planning ensures that there is good continuity between one lesson and the next. Pupils are told the objectives of lessons so that they are aware of exactly what it is that they are learning. Class control is of a high quality. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are consistently good or better. Additional support for literacy is good and many pupils benefit from the extra coaching. Increasingly, teachers are encouraging pupils to link the skills of reading unknown words with those of spelling. Challenging work is set, such as the dialogue poetry compositions in one Year 6 class. Sometimes literacy lessons are also used to develop work in other subjects. For example, pupils in the other Year 6 class improve their skills in report writing by comparing and contrasting worship in a church and a mosque. In addition, through well-structured discussion, they gain fresh insights into the spiritual beliefs of both Christian and Muslim worshippers. The end part of the lesson is often used well. Teachers encourage pupils to consider what they have achieved in their understanding and in their work. This helps them to assess what they have learned and prepares them for the next lesson. Teacher assessments are thorough and used well to inform their planning.
96. There is good leadership in English. The headteacher and co-ordinator monitor teaching and analyse pupils' progress well. They have identified specific areas for improvement and drawn up thorough plans to raise levels of teaching and learning. There is a strong commitment to improvement, driven by the headteacher and implemented by the staff.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. Standards in mathematics are good. In the national tests last year standards were above the national average both at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy has been well established. Teachers find the planning documents a good help and they teach the subject well.

98. Inspection evidence found a slightly different picture. Pupils at the top of Key Stage 1 are still reaching levels above those expected for their age. However, the present Year 6 are not achieving similar high levels. This is largely because this year group is unusual for this school in having a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. A large group will not attain the standards expected for their age, although they are achieving well for them. Other year groups are more typical of the school and in most classes in Key Stage 2 they are achieving higher than expected standards.
99. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught well. When pupils move from reception into Key Stage 1 they have a reasonable grasp of mathematics but there is a wide spread of ability. For instance, most pupils in Year 1 can count on and back in threes and fives, count accurately and put numbers up to 20 in the correct order. A few of the group are still having problems forming their numbers accurately. However, because of consistently good teaching in this key stage, pupils are learning well. Year 2 pupils identify multiples of four in a number square, they find 'missing' numbers in the square by looking at a few numbers that are in place. They recognise, for example, that a missing number underneath 24 will be 34. They are using this understanding to work problems such, 'I think of a number, halve it and the answer is nine. What is my number?' Teachers use questions well to make them think about the work they are doing and use the session at the end of a lesson to check pupils' understanding and re-inforce what has been taught.
100. Strong teaching continues to be seen in the Key Stage 2 classes. This is largely based on the way teachers know their pupils well and set appropriate work for them. Good mental number sessions were noted in most lessons, and as they move up the school most pupils develop good skills in working number problems out in their heads quickly and accurately. Year 4 pupils round numbers to the nearest ten or 100, and recognise the value of digits in numbers such as 728. Some quickly add four two-digit numbers together. This class has a mental maths competition at the end of lessons. Pairs of pupils compete to see who can answer the 'Killer Questions' in the shortest time. This sustains interest and concentration for all and helps their learning.
101. This interest and concentration was seen in most mathematics lessons so that pupils cover a good range of activities in each session. Teachers make it quite clear what they want pupils to do and how they should behave. This orderly atmosphere was seen to good effect in a Year 5 lesson as pupils thought about general rules to work out problems. When adding decimals one pupil notes, 'It's the same as adding to 100 but you put the point in'.
102. Due to staff illness the Year 6 classes have been reorganised. There are many pupils with special educational needs in the year group and so they are being taught in a small group by a temporary teacher with support staff. They are making satisfactory progress compared to their previous achievement. This has meant that the remaining 38 pupils are taught together with a range of ability from average to well above average. This has caused problems, particularly when practical activities are being attempted. However, thanks to the hard work and good teaching from their teacher, the deputy headteacher, again good progress is being made. Work is matched well to ability and even a pupil three years ahead of most of the class is given appropriate, individual, work.
103. The subject manager is absent from school through illness but as each co-ordinator is shadowed by a colleague the subject has not suffered from lack of leadership. Assessment systems are in place which not only identify well the areas of the subject

which need repeating but also are effectively used to set targets for all pupils to achieve each year. This means that any underachieving pupils are quickly identified.

## SCIENCE

104. In the national tests last year, the school's results for eleven-year-old pupils were in line with national averages and this was the case when comparisons were made with similar schools.
105. Standards in science by the end of Year 6 are now below where they should be. This is mainly due to higher than normal numbers of pupils in this year group with special educational needs; approximately 37 per cent of these pupils are on the schools' register for special needs. But these pupils are achieving well compared to their previous attainment levels.
106. Pupils in Year 6 show good gains in knowledge and understanding of subject content but they are not given enough opportunities to develop their investigative skills through planned activities in scientific enquiry. Also, pupils do not use what they have learned in their literacy writing skills well enough in science, and the overall presentation of their work lacks care and attention.
107. Standards in Years 3, 4 and 5 are better with the younger pupils showing standards in science above expectation for their age. This is due to some good teaching in these year groups and a little more emphasis on scientific enquiry. However, more opportunities to develop investigative skills in all these year groups are needed to help pupils to progress further in science.
108. Last year's teacher assessments in science for seven-year-olds, indicated that standards were in line with national averages. Standards for more able pupils were well above the national averages. These two sets of standards were similar when compared with similar schools.
109. The teacher assessments for this year's Year 2 pupils show that standards have risen well and should now be above the national average; all pupils in this age group achieved the expected level. Raising the standards in infant science was a target in the school improvement plan; this has been successfully achieved. The scrutiny of the work for Year 1 pupils indicates standards are also above those expected for pupils of this age.
110. In Year 6, most pupils understand the ideas associated with gravity and the effect of the opposing force of upthrust when weighing objects in water. Pupils use Newtonmeters in their work and record their results accurately. Other pupils show a sound understanding of fair testing in work to find the relationship between weight and extension of elastic bands. In this work pupils develop their scientific enquiry skills well. Scrutiny of work, shows that pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of: the main organs of plants and animals and how each functions; food chains and the part of producers and consumers within the chains; the classification of materials; and the differences between reversible and irreversible reactions. More able pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the properties of light. In this work, they use scientific vocabulary well, explaining the properties 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque'. In Year 5, pupils learn about the use of insulation and in their experiments they find which materials are the best insulators. In Year 4, pupils learn of the properties associated with solids and liquids and they can explain how air within solids can affect the properties of that solid. In Year 3, pupils achieve high standards in their

work. They show a good understanding of forces, in particular friction and the different forces acting on falling bodies. They have a clear understanding of gravitational forces and the opposing force of air resistance. Other pupils in this age group understand that sound is a vibration and that it travels with greater intensity through different 'mediums'.

111. In Year 2 pupils are introduced to sound, and they learn that the further they move away from a sound source the fainter it becomes. In this work they are given some opportunities to experiment with the different pitch of sounds when they use wind and percussion instruments. However, over-direction by the teacher limits pupils' opportunities to hypothesise and make predictions, and thus the development of enquiry skills is limited. In Year 1, pupils learn and understand the different properties of materials. The majority can note the changes to materials when they are heated and then cooled. More able pupils can explain the three changes of state of water using the scientific term 'water vapour' in the correct context.
112. Teaching of science throughout the school is never less than satisfactory and it is good in half the lessons seen. Teachers have a good knowledge of science and their lessons are planned well indicating clear achievable learning outcomes. Teaching is best in the younger age groups of the juniors and infants. In these lessons, ample opportunities are given for pupils to develop their scientific enquiry skills and teacher expectations are high. The management and organisation of pupils is good in all lessons. In the Year 6 class of pupils with special educational needs, additional teaching and non-teaching support has a positive impact on pupils' learning and their achievements. Pupils with special educational needs in other classes are given good support by their teachers or support assistants, and this enables them to make good progress. Teachers make good use of resources available but when class numbers are high, as is the case in one Year 6 class, insufficient resources limit opportunities for pupils to develop their investigation skills. Pupils respond well to the teaching and learning of science. Their attitudes and behaviour are never less than satisfactory and in the majority of lessons they are good.
113. The school has been pro-active in its efforts to raise standards in science throughout the school. Already the standards have risen well by the end of the infants and in the early stages of the juniors. The very effective co-ordinator, appointed in September, has re-drafted the science policy as well as revising the science schemes of work, taking into consideration the national guidance for science. He is ensuring that there is a better balance of topics in each year group and that opportunities for more scientific enquiry are taken. Work is assessed well and the information guides the planning of teaching. The use of information and communication technology to support teaching and pupils' learning in science is not yet fully in place at the school. There are no sensors for light, sound or heat measurement within the science resources. Literacy needs to be used more effectively to support pupils' work. At present too much work is poorly presented by the pupils.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

114. There is a strong tradition of art and design in the school and standards are high. There are good quality displays around the school that show pupils' skills and illustrate the breadth of the work they do. Pupils are achieving well.
115. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan a broad range of stimulating and challenging activities and are very clear about what they want pupils to do. Art activities are often accompanied by much enthusiasm from both pupils and teachers. Much art work is linked to other subjects so that the time available is well used. An example of

this was when a Year 5 class used clay to create a pot based on an Ancient Egyptian example. They moulded the clay well and created well-made pots similar to the original.

116. The school grounds provide a rich resource for art and design as well as other subjects. Pupils from Year 1 were gaining good experience of observational drawing when they studied a tree in the school grounds. Some of them looked very carefully at the overall shape of the tree and the way the leaves fitted onto the branches. Some pupils made detailed drawings using shape well. They were encouraged well by good teaching in which they were reminded, 'Draw what you see, not what you think is there'.
117. There are good links to design and technology work as models are carefully decorated when finished. Pupils are encouraged to use a wide range of materials such as when Year 3 pupils used paint well when painting on silk. They are taught effectively about the difference between this and painting on paper, and further develop their skills.
118. Teaching and learning is monitored informally by the subject manager, who provides good support for her colleagues.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. Few lessons were seen during the inspection but evidence from class displays showed a wide range of well-designed and good quality models. Standards in designing and making models were high in much of the work seen. Evaluation of the success of models is an area which could be developed to improve the quality of the work produced.
120. Pupils from Year 1 have made good quality detailed and decorative heads using a balloon to model on. They have designed them well on paper, first identifying what materials they will need. They then take the designs home to see if they can collect any items such as ribbon or buttons. An interesting way of involving parents in their work!
121. Pupils' skills are often evident in their models, such as the good use of wood to make the frame of a Tudor house. Pupils in Year 5 have made good quality ornate puppets based on African ones. Year 6 pupils test the strength of the model towers they make with paper rolls. Year 4 pupils are making a torch. They cut and fold a paper circle well to make a cone to fit the bulb in.
122. The subject co-ordinator is thinking about improving the most effective way to timetable the subject, and is considering having a day every half term, rather than a number of short lessons. She helps to ensure good coverage of topics by monitoring teachers' planning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

123. Standards in Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations. Standards in Key Stage 2 are below expectations because of the limited opportunities for practical work, and for pupils to be responsible for their own learning through independent research using reference books and computers.
124. Close to half of the pupils in a lesson seen were able to use an Ordnance Survey map well to locate places and identify features. In one Year 6 lesson seen, most pupils

found it difficult to write down directions remembering to use left and right and compass directions. During the introduction to the lesson when the teacher gave clear examples, many pupils were talking and not listening. In work seen in Years 5 and 6, pupils' written work is overall untidy. Pupils are not always being encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas, or to use and develop their literacy skills effectively through geography.

125. The overall quality of teaching was satisfactory. In one Year 4 lesson where the teaching was good, pupils were able to recall their knowledge of the purpose of a key on maps. Care had been taken, in this lesson, to choose a topic that appeals to young people, for example a map of a theme park and fair. In both key stages, most pupils made satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs, because of the way work is matched to pupils' needs.
126. There is a good range of geography display work around the school. Pupils have effectively recorded information illustrating the contrasting landscapes of Bury and Blackpool. The school makes good use of visits to the local area. On their visit to the cenotaph during Remembrance week, pupils took photographs of contrasting views of the local environment.
127. The management of the department is satisfactory. Pupils' work is well assessed and pupils' progress is discussed with staff who teach the subject. Since the previous report the school has maintained standards in Key Stage 1. As in the previous report, there are limited opportunities, especially in the present Year 6, for pupils to carry out enquiry-based activities in the classroom and outside.

## **HISTORY**

128. Standards in history are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but are lower than they should be at the end of Year 6. This represents a drop in standards at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. This is mainly because:
  - few opportunities are given for pupils to develop their skills, especially those of research (this was a criticism at the last inspection and has not yet been addressed);
  - pupils of above average ability are not set work to challenge them sufficiently;
  - there is an over-reliance on published worksheets that occupy rather than challenge.
129. Pupils' work is not sufficiently monitored. Consequently, there are wide variations in standards between different classes at both key stages. In some classes, much less work has been completed; in others it is poorly presented and untidily stored in folders. Invariably, better work is produced in books rather than on a series of worksheets.
130. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Very good teaching was seen in the reception/Year 1 class. Children were transported back in time, as the teacher donned a shawl and adopted the character of Grace Darling. She told them about her life and answered their questions. The transformation was so complete and magical that pupils expressed surprise when their teacher returned at the end of the lesson! More amazement was generated in Year 3 when Ancient Egyptian 'treasures' were extracted from a box. A plaintive, musical accompaniment added to the mood of suspense and surprise. Good planning, quality resources and imaginative teaching brings the past alive in such lessons.
131. By contrast, tasks seen in the books of older classes include copying a long extract about the Mary Rose (before writing and answering ten comprehension questions).

Pupils regularly start, though rarely finish, colouring in pictures, such as those of Tudor personalities. The best work produced is invariably when pupils themselves accept responsibility for their own learning. For example, a note-taking exercise on Egyptian mummification techniques enabled Year 6 pupils to develop their own ideas successfully. However, older pupils interviewed are unable to sequence correctly different historical periods or personalities from the past. The scheme of work ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered. However, there is no policy in place to define how the scheme is to be delivered. Accurate monitoring is required to verify that best practice is spread throughout the school. Setting higher expectations to challenge all ability levels is a priority, especially at Key Stage 2.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

132. The previous inspection showed that the standards achieved, in information and communication technology throughout the school, were below expectations at that time. Standards have improved and in the infants they are now in line with expectations. Even though the standards for juniors have improved they are still below expectations. However pupils are generally achieving well in comparison with their previous attainment.
133. There has been a big investment in this subject and a computer suite with new and reconditioned computers has recently opened. Teachers have received some preliminary training prior to a full training programme that starts in the next academic year. Already the initial training has improved the teachers' confidence and increased their knowledge, understanding and the use of both the hardware and the software programs used in teaching pupils information and communication technology. Teachers are well supported by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have a good knowledge of this subject.
134. Pupils are taught well. Lessons are planned carefully to develop pupils' information and communication technology skills. There is a good balance of direct teaching and pupils' on-hand experience. The youngest pupils in the infants have effectively learned how to log on, select programs from a menu, select shapes within this program and use a colouring tool effectively. Good links are made in this lesson with the work pupils do in numeracy. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher gives a good explanation of an art based program. Pupils learned quickly from the good teaching and were able to draw 'moonscapes' using shape and colouring tools effectively. In one Year 5 lesson, very good teaching of the use of spreadsheets enabled pupils to classify data from their numeracy lessons and then depict their data in graphical form. In another Year 5 lesson, the teacher made good links with a poetry lesson within literacy and showed pupils how to use graphics to produce a poster to support their literacy work. Pupils in this lesson, make good use of Word Art and Clip Art programs in their construction of posters on 'Macavity the Cat'.
135. The school has made information and communication technology a priority in its school improvement plan. Already there are noticeable improvements in standards and the school is well placed to raise standards throughout the school. The school co-ordinator assisted by the headteacher has had a big impact on the planned provision and teaching of this subject. There is a clear policy and a scheme of work in line with the national guidelines. The planned training programme should increase teachers' confidence, skills and expertise and enable them to cover all the requirements of this subject. At present junior pupils do not have the opportunity to learn the use of computers to control sequences of events, use sensors to collect physical data, nor to use the Internet for research purposes or for communicating via e-mail.

## MUSIC

136. Standards throughout the school usually meet and sometimes exceed national expectations. These high standards are achieved when specialist teachers are used. Standards of work seen in the present Year 6, however, are below expectations because teachers do not have the knowledge and understanding of music needed to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum. The majority of pupils enjoy singing and their diction is good. In most classes there are opportunities for pupils to compose, practise and perform. A small minority of pupils are working at a higher level in playing and performing. These pupils are supported in their learning by opportunities in extra-curricular activities and additional instrumental lessons.
137. The quality of teaching and learning is overall good at both key stages and there was one excellent lesson in Year 4. In this lesson all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress learning the technique required to play from note G to note E on the recorder. All pupils made a clear sound on the recorder, playing with the correct hand position and following the written music. The lesson was very well planned and timed with consideration for the variation in progress of the different groups of pupils. The school is fortunate in having two music specialists who teach across both key stages. The timetabling of Year 6 music does not allow the pupils to be taught by the specialist teachers. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about instruments and their sounds in other subjects. For example, in one Year 4 science lesson seen, pupils discovered the various ways in which percussion instruments produced sound. During the class movement lesson, later in the week, pupils were given the opportunity to move in response to the instruments being played. Most pupils were able to recognise variation in pitch and tempo and respond appropriately. In this lesson, girls were more successful than boys overall.
138. School assemblies provide all pupils with additional opportunities to listen and respond to music. Care is taken to choose pieces that appeal to young people. For example in the weekly achievement assembly pupils heard 'Simply the Best' and 'Gladiators'. They joined in the school song with enthusiasm.
139. Pupils know what is expected of them because teachers plan carefully. The aims of the lesson are made clear and at the beginning and end of lessons pupils are involved in recalling and consolidating knowledge. Lessons follow on from the previous one and look forward to the next. Good progress was made in one lesson where Year 6 special educational needs pupils played untuned percussion instruments. They were able to keep in time with the beat whilst singing.
140. Music has maintained good standards overall since the previous report. However, there are missed opportunities for Year 6 pupils to work in groups composing, performing and evaluating their work and the work of others. The department is well managed and staff have updated schemes of work. Assessment procedures have been introduced recently, but do not give teachers information about the skills pupils have achieved.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Standards in physical education are satisfactory in all key stages. Over the past year, the school has undergone structural change and the main hall has not always been available for physical education lessons. However, the school has provided the full range of activities needed to meet the requirements of the curriculum. By the time

pupils reach the age of eleven the vast majority are able to swim the required distance of 25 metres.

142. Physical education is taught well and during the period of the inspection lessons in gymnastics, dance and games were observed. The teaching in all of these lessons was good or better; in an infant lesson teaching was very good. Teachers show good subject knowledge and their choice of music for dance and movement encourages pupils to apply themselves and to improve their performances. This is seen in a Year 6 lesson when 36 children listen to 'Wake up, Good morning' and 'The Jitter-bug' and then watch the class teacher's performance before carrying out their own movement and dance interpretation. In a Year 4 games lesson, very good knowledge and understanding of the class teacher and support assistant enables pupils to develop and practise their new skills in hockey. They are able to effectively consolidate their competitive skills in small and full games activities. Pupils performed well and enjoyed this lesson. Pupils with special educational needs had equal opportunities to develop their skills in this lesson and one pupil was keen to show how to control, dribble and strike the hockey ball with resulting accuracy. In a Year 2 movement lesson, teaching was very good. The aims of the lesson were shared with the pupils and, due to the very good control and organisation by the teacher, most pupils successfully created a sequence of movements.
143. Extra-curricular sport arranged and run by teachers makes a major contribution to the development of physical education at the school. This is arranged for junior pupils, and many pupils attend more than one of the events. Clubs are held for football and cricket (for both boys and girls), cross-country running and athletics, netball and fencing. The uptake for these activities is high.
144. There is a whole-school policy in place and the scheme of work is presently being reviewed. The co-ordinator is supported by two other teaching colleagues and their combined interest and experience adds to the effectiveness of the way the subject is managed. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of the physical education curriculum, but the lack of smaller balls restricts the development of some skills in games activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

145. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject.
146. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn well about the stories of the birth and childhood of Jesus and Mohammed. They learn the importance of special places and ceremonies related to Christianity, Islam and Judaism. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils are able to accurately describe the outside of a Mosque. They have learned well words like worship, custom and Mecca and their meanings. In Key Stage 2, early learning is built upon and pupils increase their knowledge of Bible stories and have a good understanding of the message in the teachings of Jesus. They learn the significance of prayer in all faiths and relate this to their own lives. They are interested in other religions. They are able to compare the buildings, customs and festivals of the Christian and Muslim religions. By the end of the key stage, pupils have learned significant aspects of major faiths. Throughout the school, pupils use their literacy skills to discuss and record information. There are limited opportunities for older pupils to research using reference books and computers.

147. The quality of teaching is good overall. In most lessons pupils' knowledge and understanding is built upon progressively as pupils move through the school. Work is planned to match the attainment of the pupils. Staff make full use of resources available. However, artefacts and books are inadequate for the larger classes. Pupils' work is assessed and marking is consistent.
148. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils are given the opportunity to think and consider in many lessons.
149. The management of religious education is very good. Planning is good and detailed good support is given to the teaching staff. The curriculum is based on the locally agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator and staff are committed to raising standards and awareness in the subject.