

# INSPECTION REPORT

**WENSLEY FOLD C of E (VC) PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Blackburn with Darwen

LEA area: Blackburn

Unique reference number: 119412

Headteacher: Mrs G A Stubbs

Reporting inspector: Mr A J Dobell  
10373

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 185149

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Type of school:              | Primary                       |
| School category:             | Voluntary Controlled          |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 - 11                        |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                         |
| School address:              | Manor Road<br>Blackburn       |
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| Appropriate authority:       | The Governing Body            |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Rev P C Battersby             |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1998                 |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities  |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 10373        | Mr A J Dobell  | Registered inspector | Mathematics<br>Music<br>Physical education   | What sort of school is it?<br>The school's results and pupils' achievements.<br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well is the school led and managed?<br>What should this school do to improve further? |
| 09974        | Mr D Singh     | Lay inspector        |  | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?   |
| 12332        | Mrs D Atkinson | Team inspector       | English<br>Art and design<br>Design and technology<br>Religious education<br>Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage<br>English as an additional language | How well does the school care for its pupils?  |

|       |               |                |   |  |
|-------|---------------|----------------|---|--|
| 22482 | Mr B W Potter | Team inspector | Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Geography<br>History<br>Equal opportunities<br>Special educational needs | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
|-------|---------------|----------------|---|--|

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated on the outskirts of Blackburn in a pleasant open setting. Most pupils live in terraced housing, with a few living in larger detached Victorian houses. Some two-thirds of the pupils are of Asian origin, and a substantial number (66 per cent) have English as an additional language. This is very high in relation to the national average. Some 14 per cent of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The area has a range of socio-economic problems, and the attainment of pupils is below average when they enter the school.

There are 240 pupils on roll from the reception Year to Year 6. There are 31 children in the reception class. The school is of average size for primary schools. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll; 129 to 111. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (20.4 per cent) is about average. Similarly, the proportions of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs (17.6 per cent), and with statements of special educational needs (1.7 per cent), are broadly in line with the national average. Pupils on the special needs register have a range of learning difficulties, including emotional and behavioural difficulties, visual impairment, physical disability, and moderate learning difficulties.

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

This is a very effective school in the context in which it is working. It has many strengths and few weaknesses. The results attained by the school's pupils in the National Curriculum tests at the end of both key stages have improved steadily since the last inspection. In 2000, the results at age seven and eleven were broadly in line with the national average. At the age of seven, they were well above those achieved in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds; at the age of eleven, they were above the results in similar schools.

The quality of teaching is good, and effectively promotes good learning. There are good strategies to ensure equality and access of opportunity, and all groups of pupils are included in all the school's activities. Leadership and management are very good, and the school gives very good value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good: there are particular strengths in the management of classes, and the use of time, learning resources, and support teachers and assistants. As a result, the quality of learning is good, and pupils have a very good awareness of what they are learning and why.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils who have English as an additional language. These pupils make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school, and behave well; they enjoy their learning.
- The quality of the curriculum is very good; out of school learning and the use of the community to support learning are particular strengths; all pupils have full access to the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- The quality of the personal and academic support provided for pupils is very good.
- The school has very good links with parents, who are regarded as key partners in their children's learning.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are major strengths of the school: she is supported very well by the school's governing body.

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

- The school has no major weaknesses: points for development are listed in the report.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was first inspected in June 1995, and had a further inspection in November 1998. The school's rate of improvement since 1998 has been very good. The quality of teaching has improved markedly. As a result, the rate of improvement in the results attained by the school's pupils at the age of eleven in English, mathematics, and science, has exceeded the national trend.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and other key staff are now more sharply focused. They are very effective in meeting the school's needs. All the key issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully. There is an excellent commitment to improving standards of attainment and the quality of education in the school, and a clear capacity to succeed. Work is carefully matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, and the school now monitors and promotes the academic progress of individual pupils very well. The school's provision for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language, is very good.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

very low                E\*

Attainment at the age of eleven has improved well since the school was first inspected. Attainment in English is strong; in 2000, it was above the national average, and well above the average attained in similar schools. In mathematics and science, the same proportion of the school's pupils attained the national expectation of level 4, at least, as was the case nationally, but fewer pupils attained the higher level 5. As a result of this, attainment in these subjects was below the national average. However, this school's attainment matched that of similar schools.

Attainment at the age of seven has improved well since the first inspection. In 2000, attainment in reading for the school's pupils was below the national average, in writing, it was above the national average, and, in mathematics, it matched the national average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was above average in reading, and well above average in writing and mathematics.

At the end of both key stages, the inspectors find attainment in speaking and listening below average, attainment in reading is average, and attainment in writing is above average. Attainment in mathematics and science is average. In art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, and physical education, attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In geography and history, attainment is in line with national expectations at the age of seven, and above national expectations at the age of eleven. In music, attainment is above expectations at the age of seven and well above expectations at the age of eleven. In religious education, attainment is above that expected for pupils following the locally agreed syllabus at the age of both seven and eleven. Overall, attainment has improved well since the last inspection.

Pupils throughout the school, including those in the Foundation Stage, those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning. Attainment at the age of five is at the level found in most schools.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy their work, and are keen to play a full part in lessons.                                     |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Behaviour is good overall. In most lessons pupils support each other very well. Play is boisterous but friendly.                              |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. |
| Attendance                             | Attendance during this academic year has been in line with the national average.  |

Pupils are highly motivated in lessons, and most pupils clearly enjoy their work. As a result, their conduct is good, and they are learning in a secure and often stimulating environment. Attendance has improved well since the school was first inspected. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good and has improved markedly since the school was first inspected. Of the 56 lessons observed during the inspection, five per cent were excellent, 15 per cent were very good, 56 per cent good and 24 per cent satisfactory. No teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school. The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory, but there is scope for further development. Teachers have challenging but realistic expectations for their pupils, and the lessons they prepare meet the needs of all groups of pupils in the school. Skilful questioning tests and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding. The management of pupils is a strength, and effective teaching motivates different groups of pupils very successfully. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning experiences is good throughout the school, and pupils have a very good understanding of what they are learning and why. However, teachers could plan more opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning, particularly in Key Stage 2.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | The curriculum is broad and balanced and fulfils all statutory requirements. Out of school learning and the use of the community to support learning are particular strengths. All groups of pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and, with the very high quality of support that they receive, they make good progress in their learning.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | There is very good provision for pupils who have English as a second language, and, as a result of the very high quality of support they receive, these pupils make good progress in their learning.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | There is very good provision for pupils' personal development. Provision for moral and social development is very good; provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.  |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Educational and personal support for all pupils is very good. Teachers know their pupils well and care for them effectively.   |

The school's curriculum is rich and relevant, and there are very good opportunities for learning outside class. The school makes excellent use of its favourable location to support learning. Pupils and parents are very appreciative of the quality of the support for all pupils in the school. The school has very good links with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides very good leadership; she is ably supported by her deputy and other key staff. This clear-sighted leadership has been central to the school's very good improvement since its first inspection. The headteacher has high expectations for the school, rooted in high standards of attainment, care, and conduct. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | The governing body is very effective in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities. It has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for potential improvement.  |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance, and identifying priorities for future development.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | The school uses its resources, human and physical, very well. Its use of support teachers and assistants is a particular strength. The school is very alert to the need to get best value from its expenditure.   |

Leadership and management have a clear vision for the school. It is to continue to raise standards, maintain its good quality of care for its pupils, and to establish the school at the heart of the community which it serves. Equality of opportunity is a central concern of leadership, and all groups of pupils are fully included in the school's programmes of work. Staff are united in their determination to provide all their pupils with high quality learning experiences, so that they can all reach their potential both academically and personally. There is a very good match of teachers and other staff to the needs of the

school, and accommodation and learning resources are good.

## 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>▪ Children make good progress.</li><li>▪ Behaviour is good.</li><li>▪ Teaching is good.</li><li>▪ Parents are well informed about progress.</li><li>▪ Parents are confident when approaching the school with concerns.</li><li>▪ Children are expected to work hard and do their best.</li><li>▪ The school works closely with parents.</li><li>▪ Children become mature and responsible.</li><li>▪ There is a good range of activities outside class.</li><li>▪ Children like school.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 11 per cent of parents express concerns about the amount of homework.</li></ul> |

The school distributed 238 questionnaires and 136 were returned (57 per cent). The parents' meeting before the inspection was attended by 27 parents.

Inspectors support the very positive views held by parents. At the meeting, one view was that there was not enough homework, while another view was that there was too much. The inspection judgement is that the school uses homework well to support learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, in English, 91 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 4, with 31 per cent attaining the higher level 5. This was above the national average, and well above the average attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, 71 per cent of the school's pupils attained level 4 at least, with 11 per cent attaining level 5. This was below the national average, but broadly in line with the average attained in similar schools. In science, 86 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least level 4, and 23 per cent attained level 5. Again, this was below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. In each subject, girls were ahead of the national average for all girls. Boys were ahead of all boys nationally only in English. In mathematics, they were markedly behind the national average for boys; in science they were slightly less behind. However, there is no evidence to suggest that this is part of a pattern or trend. Indeed, the trend of improvement in the school's average National Curriculum points score from 1996 to 2000 was above the national trend.
2. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, 65 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 2, with 29 per cent attaining the higher level 3. This was below the national average, but above the average attained by pupils in similar schools. In writing, 83 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least level 2, and 18 per cent attained level 3. This was above the national average, and well above the average for similar schools. In mathematics, 98 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least level 2, with 24 per cent attaining level 3. This matched the national average, and was well above the average for similar schools. Given the school's very large number of pupils who have English as an additional language, the school's achievements in writing in both key stages are highly creditable. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved well since the school was first inspected.
3. Children under the age of five enter the Reception class with levels of attainment below those normally found. Many children have English as an additional language, and, of these, a substantial number are in the early stages of acquiring English, and need support in their home language. Because of the good teaching they receive, their carefully planned programme of work, and the very good quality of the support available to them, they make good progress in their learning. As a result, the large majority of children are in line to attain the early learning goals in the six areas of learning by the time they leave the Foundation Stage, and begin their work on the National Curriculum.
4. The school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good, and they make good progress in their learning in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils work effectively towards the targets identified in their individual education plans, and these are reviewed regularly so that new targets can be set. In lessons, pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and play a full part in learning.

5. The school makes very good provision for the very high numbers of pupils who have English as an additional language. As a result of the quality of this provision, these pupils make good progress in their learning across all key stages. These pupils have full equality of access to the curriculum, and their good attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is a measure of the school's success in meeting their needs.
6. In art and design, design and technology, information and communications technology, and physical education, attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In geography and history, attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In music, standards are above of national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and well above at the end of Key Stage 2. In religious education, attainment exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. Attainment overall has improved markedly since the school was first inspected, and the school is in a strong position to continue to improve.
7. The school has introduced the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully. Teachers are secure in their understanding of the principles of these strategies, and they are being used effectively to raise attainment. The numeracy strategy has been operating for one year less than the literacy strategy, and so there has been less time for it to have an impact on standards. The school is less systematic in planning opportunities for pupils to practise numerical skills in other subjects than it is in the case in English, which is targeted in the cross-curricular matrix. Attainment in literacy is average at the end of Key Stage 1, and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. In numeracy, attainment is average at the end of both key stages.
8. The school set agreed targets for 2000 in English and mathematics (but not in science) for its pupils for the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2. These targets were exceeded. It has agreed further challenging but realistic targets for 2001, and is in line to meet them.
9. As a result of the school's carefully planned provision for all its pupils, there are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender or educational backgrounds. There is good added value in relation to pupils' prior attainment as they move through the key stages, and the school uses its resources very effectively to promote learning and raise attainment.

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

10. Attitudes, behaviour, relationships, and pupils' personal development are good. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. These good standards have been sustained since the report of the school's first inspection. Most pupils have a constructive and positive attitude to their learning, and to school. They enjoy school. In lessons, they concentrate well and enjoy the challenge of new tasks. Where opportunities are provided, pupils make good use of their initiative, and adopt a responsible attitude to learning. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly receptive to the very good quality teaching. During lessons, they contribute confidently in discussions and are prepared to listen to their peers and teachers, and to consider the views of others. Pupils show great enthusiasm when the topic of the lesson catches their interest, as it did, for example, in a Year 4 English lesson about verbal and written communication and the correct

use of nouns, verbs and adjectives. Pupils with special educational needs worked co-operatively, and were keen to answer the teacher's questions. They helped each other to make decisions about the practical problems that they were trying to solve.

11. Pupils show respect for property, and share resources helpfully. They work hard and show pride in their achievements. Behaviour in class is good, and behaviour at play is boisterous but friendly. Relationships between different groups of pupils are almost always good. However, in an isolated incident during the inspection, a small group of pupils were insensitive in their behaviour towards a visitor. The headteacher and staff work diligently to ensure and promote good race relations and continue to provide an environment of respect, and are very largely successful. This was evident, for example, when pupils were invited to a literacy and numeracy workshop held at Blackburn Rovers Football ground.
12. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, particularly when they are being escorted to the adjacent dining hall. Good behaviour was particularly evident during the breakfast hour and before the school day. Older pupils on educational visits have very good standards of behaviour. Interviews with pupils show they know the rules for good behaviour at playtimes, and what to do if they are bullied. Most pupils are confident that teachers will deal with any incidents effectively. However, isolated incidents at playtimes and lunchtimes, particularly in the playground, are not always identified and then dealt with satisfactorily.
13. Relationships within the school are good. Teachers and most lunchtime support staff set positive examples of caring, friendly behaviour and this fosters good relationships between pupils and teachers. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Most pupils show courtesy and respect when speaking to adults, such as visitors, and some open doors politely. These good relationships have helped to ensure that there have been no exclusions in recent years.
14. Pupils are given opportunities for personal development both within school and in activities outside lessons. These promote their sense of community and citizenship, and they respond well. Pupils of all ages, and particularly Year 6 pupils, respond positively to the opportunities that they are given to show initiative and responsibility in and out of lessons.
15. There is an informal 'Buddying System' in which older pupils take it in turn to help and assist younger pupils during breakfast hour. Year 6 pupils take turns to answer the telephone at lunchtimes, and other younger pupils are eager to assist teachers during lessons with putting out equipment. Pupils regularly raise funds for charity and these opportunities also contribute significantly to pupils' personal and social development.
16. Attendance is satisfactory. The headteacher and staff work rigorously to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. Parents are reminded about the importance of regular attendance. Registers are taken at the beginning of each session, and comply with statutory requirements. However, levels of unauthorised absence are above the national average. This is primarily due to the high rate of pupils taken on extended family holidays during term time. These absences have an adverse effect on pupils' learning, their progress, and their personal and social development. They also reduce pupils' access to the full range of the curriculum. Punctuality is sometimes unsatisfactory for pupils who rely on their parents to accompany them to school, especially in Key Stage 1. This problem also disrupts learning and sets negative examples for pupils to follow.

17. Since the last inspection, attendance has improved because a number of parents, taking the school's advice, have taken extended family holidays during the summer recess.

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

18. The quality of teaching is good throughout the key stages. During the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was observed; in five per cent of the lessons the quality of teaching was excellent, in 15 per cent of lessons it was very good, in 56 per cent of lessons it was good, and in 24 per cent it was satisfactory. In English, 87 per cent of the teaching was good or better, and, in mathematics 78 per cent of teaching was good or better. Since the school's first inspection in 1995, the quality of teaching has improved well, and is now more consistent across the key stages and the subjects of the curriculum.
19. In English, mathematics and science, teachers have good subject knowledge. This enables them to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively. As a result, pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress in their acquisition of these skills. For example, in Key Stage 1, there is a very good concentration on phonic skills so that pupils, including those who have English as an additional language, have a clear understanding of how sounds fit together to form a word. Similarly, in mathematics, the emphasis on number throughout the school means that pupils of all ages and abilities recognise patterns in number sequences, and have good skills in using numbers. The school's very good use of support teachers and assistants in literacy lessons results in attainment, particularly in writing, being above the national average. There is less rich provision in numeracy, and attainment in mathematics is less good.
20. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding in most other subjects of the curriculum. As a result pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. The subjects in which teacher's knowledge and understanding are less secure are design and technology and information and communication technology. Teachers are less confident in the design element of design and technology, and in the evaluation of the finished product. Knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology have improved since the school's first inspection. However, this is an area in which change and advancement are very rapid, and the school is aware that there is a need for further development in this area. Now that the computer suite is in operation, the school is in a position to improve teaching and learning further in this increasingly important subject.
21. Teachers' planning is good. Teachers work well together so that there is a good level of consistency across the key stages. A particular strength is the emphasis placed on the learning objectives for lessons. The continuing reference to what pupils are learning and why during lessons, gives pupils a very good awareness and understanding of their own learning.
22. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations for pupils' conduct and concentration. As a result, pupils put a good amount of effort into their work, they work at a good pace, and are productive in the amount of work they cover. Pupils know that their work and efforts are valued, and that successes will be

acknowledged, for example, in the awards assemblies. The school uses homework well to support learning, and pupils know that the work they do at home will be marked and appreciated.

23. Another strength is the very effective management of pupils in lessons. This results from a combination of skills such as effective planning, clear explanations, skilled questioning and a range of teaching methods. Pupils are challenged and motivated by interesting learning experiences, and work with real interest and sustained concentration. They enjoy their work: as one parent remarked at the parents' meeting held before the inspection, 'in this school, learning is fun'. The very good management of pupils is rooted in the good relationships between pupils and adults throughout the school. In many lessons, pupils and teachers and support assistants unite in the enjoyment of learning, so that management of behaviour is almost unnoticed. These good relationships are enhanced by the effective use of praise and humour, which help to maintain pupils' motivation.
24. There are examples of pupils learning independently and managing and organising their own learning. A good example is the science projects completed at home over time by older pupils. However, for much of the time, learning is controlled and managed by adults, and, in most subjects, pupils have few opportunities to take decisions about how to manage their work. There is scope for this area of teaching and learning to be developed further.
25. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching for these pupils is effective; this can be seen in the interest that they show in their work, their good pace when working, the amount they produce, and the very good understanding that they have of what they are doing. As a result of this very good provision, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
26. There is also very good provision for the substantial majority of pupils who have English as an additional language. The school uses its support teachers and bilingual and other assistants with impressive skill, so that these pupils have full access to all aspects of the curriculum. As a result, they make good progress in their learning, and attain at a level which matches their ability by the time that they leave the school. It is a tribute to the school's provision that writing is above the national average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, in a situation in which two thirds of pupils are writing in a second language.
27. Teachers have good systems for assessing pupils' work and promoting further progress. Work is marked regularly, and there are good examples of useful comments suggesting how work can be improved further. Pupils are given individual targets to aim for, and these are referred to in lessons, so that pupils are always aware of the need to try to improve.
28. Teaching has improved well since the school was first inspected. The school is in a good position to go on to improve further.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and delivered in such a way as to stimulate and maintain the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. It is very effective in helping the school to achieve its motto, 'Make each day count'. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a carefully planned curriculum.
30. In common with schools nationally, the school has invested a lot of time and energy in developing the core curriculum areas of English, mathematics and science. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective. These subjects, together with information and communications technology, have received very appropriate emphasis, but not at the expense of other areas. The school values and promotes all other subjects, and the foundation subjects and religious education all contribute to the good and wide learning experiences provided for pupils.
31. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs, and for its large number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. These groups of pupils have very good access to the curriculum, and the level and the quality of the support they receive is of a very high standard. This enhances the quality of their learning experiences.
32. The curriculum is further enhanced by very good extra-curricular provision, including various sporting and musical activities. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy lunchtime clubs featuring such things as first aid, which gains them First Aid accreditation from St John's Ambulance Brigade. An after school homework club contributes significantly towards the quality of learning for pupils in Key Stage 2. A large number of pupils enjoy these various activities and a high proportion of staff are involved. Events take place at different times of the day, and this enables all pupils to attend.
33. The very good and thoughtful organisation of extra-curricular activities is just one area in which equal opportunities are provided for all groups of pupils. The level and quality of support given to curricular areas is another factor that ensures that each and every pupil has equal access to learning, and benefits from all that the school provides. Recent building modifications are making it easier to meet the special needs of specific pupils.
34. Personal, social and health education is well thought out, and follows the guidelines of the school's very good policy. It is planned as a separate component but is included in the day-to-day delivery of the whole curriculum. Such matters as sex education and health and drugs education find a natural inclusion in the science curriculum, and 'circle time', when pupils discuss issues while sitting in a circle. This is a time when pupils learn to respect other people's views and opinions, and begin to understand the fundamentals of what is meant by citizenship.
35. Overall, the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
36. The provision for spiritual development is good, and pupils learn to appreciate the worth and value of each person. In effective acts of collective worship, pupils gain insight into the life and actions of other people, and are encouraged to reflect upon why some people act the way they do, and why certain events happen. Poems by Year 6 pupils sensitively recall events, which have made a lasting impression upon their feelings and emotions. Assembly themes are well planned and designed to

encourage pupils to look beyond the obvious; for example, that events are not always in accordance with our expectations.

37. Moral and social provision are very good, and are closely inter-linked. There is a clear code of conduct and high expectations for good behaviour, which results in consideration and care for others. Pupils are polite and friendly and are clearly able to distinguish right from wrong. The school places very good emphasis on developing in pupils the capability to resolve their minor differences between themselves. The very good provision for social development is illustrated by the School Council, on which representatives of pupils and staff debate matters of mutual interest for the benefit of their school. The school reaches out to its community; it takes part in a citizenship project and pupils visit the Town Hall and meet the Mayor. Support is given to charity, and a special charity is chosen and supported each term; the current one is the British Heart Foundation.
38. The provision for cultural development is good. A strong contribution comes through music in the school. The school curriculum supports cultural development; for example, a week is designated each year for an area of cultural development. The value given to other cultures is seen in a number of displays around the school, for example, 'Visiting Mecca for Hajj'. Further good multi-cultural experience was seen in a visit of a Buddhist to the school to talk about his faith. Through this multi-cultural curriculum, the school does much to eliminate behaviour which is influenced by prejudice, stereotyping, racism and sexism.
39. The school has some very good links with community and partner institutions, which are used to very good effect in enhancing the pupils' learning experiences. For example, the curriculum for geography was very much enhanced by the visit to the school of the Groundwork team. Wensley Fold is very much part of a 'family of schools'. Year 6 pupils enjoy the facilities of a nearby secondary school to help to develop their scientific investigation skills. Year 5 pupils are helped by a teacher and older pupils from the secondary school to develop mapping and orienteering skills. These are just a few of the benefits which stem from the very good links with partner institutions. There are some good links with industry, for example, the North West Water Board and Asda, and such links add further opportunities to develop relevant and meaningful experiences in pupils' learning.

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

40. The provision for pupils' care, their security, and well-being is a positive feature of the school. The arrangements for child protection are firmly in place, and are being implemented by a caring and sensitive designated teacher to provide a safe and secure learning environment. Health and safety are given appropriate emphasis, and the school works diligently to facilitate all aspects of care. Individual care and pastoral support for pupils are very good. Teachers listen and respond constructively to pupils' individual concerns, and the pastoral provision is enhanced by members of staff with multilingual skills, and particularly through the work of home visits. The very good understanding of issues affecting ethnic minority pupils and families brings an extra dimension to the school, and helps teachers and support staff to recognise the importance of diverse cultures and languages. The very good levels of individual support for pupils with special educational needs complement the individual support provided for all pupils. Parents appreciate this provision. The school nurse provides a caring and sensitive programme to enhance pupils' personal and social education, which includes health and sex education. 'Circle time' is used well to address concerns, develop pupils' confidence, and raise their self-esteem.

41. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance, and the information is used effectively to raise attendance and to ensure the support of all parents. The existing programme is hindered by the lack of support from a small number of parents, but this problem is diminishing.
42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good. The existing policy forms a solid foundation for good practice in the classroom and is implemented satisfactorily throughout the school. Teachers recognise individual achievements in order to raise self-esteem and confidence. This promotes good attitudes, behaviour, and constructive relationships.
43. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating bullying are satisfactory. The school is committed to the elimination of racism. Strategies are in place to monitor and record incidents of racist behaviour. However, these strategies need to be more rigorously implemented, particularly by lunchtime support staff. Isolated and sometimes overt incidents of racial harassment are not consistently identified and tackled. Overall, the school is making satisfactory progress to eliminate anti-social behaviour.
44. The quality of the procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress has improved markedly since the school's first inspection. At that time it was noted that assessment lacked sufficient rigour and that it was not used adequately to evaluate the progress of boys, or those with English as an additional language. Although by 1997 Her Majesty's Inspectors noted progress, there were still weaknesses. Assessment was not linked sufficiently closely to the identified objectives for lessons, or analysed to identify trends revealed by the data. For example, particular strengths or weaknesses within subjects were not recognised. All these issues have been addressed successfully.
45. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are now good. The range of procedures is comprehensive, and the school fully meets the statutory requirements to assess pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. The school now understands how to analyse the scores achieved in the assessments. This enables them to identify specific strengths and weaknesses within a subject. This has influenced the shaping of the curriculum and resulted in new strategies such as the introduction of joined writing at an early stage, a new approach to spelling, and the adoption of the 'First Steps' recording system for writing. All these initiatives have had a positive effect on standards.
46. A comprehensive range of tests, including the optional National Curriculum tests in Year 3, 4 and 5, and a baseline test in writing and numeracy at the beginning of each year for every class, provide bench marks from which to measure the progress of every pupil. An initial assessment is made of pupils entering the Reception class. In addition, in Key Stages 1 and 2, foundation subjects are tested at the end of each unit of work, or on a half termly basis. This links assessment closely to the learning objectives for all subjects. Teachers keep detailed records of reading progress, spelling knowledge, and analyse a further piece of writing twice a year. Systems are

used consistently across the school, and the data obtained is analysed and used assiduously to track every pupil's progress. This data is easy to use, and reveals the progress of different groups. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, and the monitoring of their progress, is very good.

47. Evidence from assessments is carefully collated and forms the basis of end-of-year reports, feedbacks to parents at meetings, and discussions with each pupil so that they can participate in deciding their individual targets. The school ensures that the academic and personal development of every pupil is meticulously tracked. There are formal transfer meetings at the end of the year when the existing class teacher systematically goes through each pupil's assessment sheet, which highlights the personal strengths and targets for improvement, with the class teacher for the following year. Pupils are actively involved in the target setting, are very aware of their targets, and use them daily. Staff ensure that these are achieved, and that new ones are agreed. Still in the relatively early stages of implementation, the whole approach to assessment is proving to be very well thought out; thorough, but not over burdensome. It is having a positive effect on attainment and progress.

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

48. Parents have very positive views of the school, and the school is successful in achieving an effective partnership. They enjoy constructive relationships with the headteacher and other staff, and very much appreciate the school's work on behalf of their children. They understand that the school sees them as key partners in their children's education, and welcomes and values their support.
49. The headteacher, governors and staff work diligently with, and continue to achieve the very effective participation of parents. The school's parents' room offers a welcome and friendly programme, which facilitates learning for both pupils and parents. Regular workshops are held for parents which support standards in reading, information and communication technology and the social development of pupils and their parents. Young ethnic minority mothers particularly value the support they receive from the school, which helps them to raise the standard of their children's work. Of particular note is the school's provision of courses to develop 'parents as educators'. Parents regularly visit the school and support learning in the classroom. This is appreciated by teachers, and clearly contributes well to both teaching and learning. All these very positive initiatives are a significant strength of the school.
50. There is a very good level of communication between the school and home. Inspection evidence clearly illustrates that parents are actively encouraged to attend parents' evenings and to work closely with teachers. Many parents, including minority ethnic parents, bring their children to school and take this opportunity to meet and talk to class teachers. This offers them the chance to visit the parents' room and classroom, acknowledge their child's achievements, and understand the topics being taught. Parents receive clear, purposeful written information which is friendly and accessible. Weekly newsletters are valued, and are complemented by the school prospectus, and the annual report from governors. Both of these comply with statutory requirements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews, whilst pupils with statements of special educational needs are given annual reviews to enable parents to understand the progress that their child is making. Parents also receive an end of year progress report, which ensures that they are aware of their child's progress and development. There are opportunities for parents to respond to the contents of the report.
51. Most parents have agreed to support the school by signing a home/school agreement,

but a few parents are less supportive and take long holidays in term time. However, the headteacher, governors and bi-lingual assistant are developing close links with parents to improve existing levels of attendance by discouraging extended family holidays during term time.

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

52. The school has a positive ethos which is underpinned by its clear vision of what it is trying to achieve. This is to enable all its pupils to reach their potential academically while developing into happy and tolerant individuals who respect themselves and others. To this end, the school seeks to be an integral part of the community that it serves. The school is successfully achieving these challenging aims throughout its work. The headteacher has been central in developing this ethos, and has developed a strong team of adults who are firmly committed to high standards of attainment within the context of a secure and stimulating learning environment.
53. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy and other colleagues, provides the school with very good leadership. Her drive and clarity of thought have enabled the school to respond with impressive rigour and enthusiasm to the challenges posed by its first two inspections. The school's rate of improvement has been very good, and the key issues identified by the last two inspections have been met successfully. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its performance, and for going on to identify new priorities for its future development.
54. The headteacher and all her colleagues recognise, as a central principle, the key need to ensure that all pupils in the school have full equality of opportunity, and equality of access to the curriculum. The school's very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs, and for those who have English as an additional language, ensures that these substantial groups of pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's work. No pupil is excluded from any activity on the grounds of gender. The school is in the process of agreeing a policy to identify and support any pupils who have particular gifts or talents. Higher attaining pupils are currently challenged by being given more difficult extension work.
55. The school's senior management team consists of the headteacher and two senior colleagues. Because of staff relocations, there is currently no representative of Key Stage 1 or the Foundation Stage on the senior management team. The team meets fortnightly, and its decisions are reported to the next staff meeting. The senior management team is a useful source of advice and support for the headteacher, and plays a central role in identifying priorities for the next school development plan.
56. The governing body is very effective and fulfils its statutory duties well. Many governors are in the school regularly, and are able to bring a first hand knowledge of the school's work to the governing body's deliberations. This is an important factor when governors debate issues in their carefully designed committee structure. This first hand knowledge is further enhanced by the fact that all governors have a subject link, and, through discussions with their subject's co-ordinator, governors have a very good appreciation of the needs of different subjects. The governors play a valuable part in setting the budget to reflect, as far as possible, the priorities identified in the school development plan. The governing body participates fully in setting these priorities. It goes on to monitor the school's progress in meeting these priorities, and oversees the school's financial situation throughout the year. The governing body shares the headteacher's vision for the school, and she appreciates its advice and support in its role as 'critical friend' as it evaluates the school's progress.

57. The school has very good procedures for strategic planning. Curriculum co-ordinators, together with their paired governor, make proposals for their subject's needs, and, from these, the priorities for the next year are agreed. The school development plan then becomes a working document, and governors consider the progress being made towards its priorities at all their meetings. These priorities are very well supported by the process of financial planning. Staff development is rooted in the priorities identified in the school development plan, and is managed effectively by the deputy headteacher. It operates according to the agreed policy, and is flexible enough to meet the particular development needs of individual teachers. Finance intended for particular purposes, for example, for the professional development of staff and for special educational needs, is used appropriately.
58. The school makes good use of new technology. Its use in administration is effective, and it is being used increasingly to support learning across the curriculum, although there is considerable scope for further development. Now that its new computer suite is operating, the school has good opportunities to develop information and communication technology as an everyday tool for learning.
59. The school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Its routines are clear and well understood. Pupils move smoothly from one activity to the next, and lessons start and end punctually. The school's finances are well managed by the school administration officer on a day-to-day basis, and the school has efficient procedures for ordering and paying for its purchases. The Finance Committee of the governing body has very good systems for obtaining best value from expenditure. Prudent financial management has enabled the school to make a number of improvements to its building in recent years, which have enhanced the quality of the education being offered.
60. The school is very well staffed to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The number of teachers for the number of pupils in the school is above the national average, and the school has a good number of support assistants of different types. Its use of its support teachers and assistants to support work in literacy throughout the school and in numeracy at Key Stage 1 is a very good example of getting the best value from resources. Teaching and non-teaching staff work very well together, and this fruitful partnership is a key factor in achieving the quality of learning that the school provides. The contributions of parent helpers are much appreciated by the school. All adults in the school have an excellent commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. Teaching is managed very well: new staff are settled into the school very effectively, and the school is a valuable provider of initial teacher training.
61. The quality of the school's accommodation is good, and it is maintained very well by the site supervisor and his staff. The building is welcoming, and the learning environment is enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work. There are adequate hard play areas, and a playing field, and the school benefits from a most attractive open site. It makes excellent use of its surroundings in a range of learning activities. Resources for learning are good, and in some cases, for example, music, very good.
62. The school has improved very well since its last inspection because of the vigorous leadership of the headteacher, and the very good support she has received from all her colleagues on the staff and the governing body. The school is in a strong position to continue to improve.

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

63. The school has an effective culture of self-evaluation, and there are no major weaknesses to be addressed. The governing body's action plan should, however, respond to the inspection by considering the following points for development:
- (1) giving pupils more opportunities to take responsibility for their learning; (see paragraph 24);
  - (2) developing pupils' and teachers' skills in information and communication technology so that it can be used more widely to support learning in subjects across the curriculum; (see paragraphs 20, 58, 110, 150);
  - (3) varying the use of support teachers in Key Stage 2, so that greater support is provided for mathematics; (see paragraphs 19, 105);
  - (4) developing the senior management team so as to give representation to all key stages; (see paragraph 55).

### **English as an additional language**

64. At the time of the inspection, 159 pupils had English as an additional language (66.25 per cent), and 33 pupils were at an early stage of English acquisition (13.75 per cent). The school makes very good provision for these pupils. They make good progress in their learning, and, because of the quality of the school's provision, and the skill with which it is managed, all pupils with English as an additional language have full equality of access to the curriculum.
65. In the Reception class, some one-third of pupils need to use their home language in their work. The effective deployment of the bilingual assistant, and her skill in supporting the teacher means that these children make good progress, and their knowledge of English develops well. While the use of the home language diminishes as pupils grow older, bilingual support is available in Key Stage 1, and is used effectively, for example, in the Literacy Hour. Where there are particular needs, the school's provision is flexible enough to meet them. For example, a boy in Year 5, newly arrived in the country, was being supported by a commentary in his own language. This is giving him good access to the curriculum so that he is making good progress.
66. The school's very effective organisation of its teaching ensures that all pupils have the opportunity for support in all subject areas. This is achieved by careful grouping, bilingual support, and, sometimes by the provision of amended tasks. Teachers and support assistants are conscientious in their concentration on key subject vocabulary so that all pupils become familiar with it. Care is taken to ensure that pronunciation is clear. When bilingual assistants are available, teachers ensure that the use of their language results in a secure understanding of subject content. Good quality visual aids help to make lesson content clear to all pupils, for example, in all literacy and numeracy lessons. Care is taken to recognise the different cultural backgrounds of pupils. All work is firmly rooted by teachers in the National Curriculum and religious education, so that all groups of pupils are guaranteed full inclusion. Withdrawal from classes is minimised, and most work is done in the class. When withdrawal takes place for particular reasons, it is normally with other pupils, so that those who have English as an additional language do not feel different.
67. Comprehensive systems have been developed to track and monitor the progress of pupils who have English as an additional language. Targets are set, and progress

towards these targets is analysed. This information is then used by teachers in their planning of future learning so that any areas of weakness can be addressed.

68. The school's provision for pupils with English as an additional language is well managed. The co-ordinator for this area and the language assistants are appropriately qualified, and their full involvement in the planning of lessons is an important element in ensuring that all pupils have good opportunities to make progress. This is an area of strength in the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 54 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 35 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 5         | 15        | 56   | 24           | 0              | 0    | 0         |

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

### Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll   | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | -       | 240     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | -       | 49      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | -       | 4       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | -       | 42      |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 159          |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 11           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 7            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 6.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 1.3 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  |      | 2000 | 18    | 16    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 11      | 16      | 18          |
|   | Girls    | 11      | 12      | 15          |
|   | Total    | 22      | 28      | 33          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 65 (80) | 82 (60) | 97 (86)     |
|   | National | 84 (82) | 85 (83) | 90 (87)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 15      | 18          | 13      |
|   | Girls    | 12      | 15          | 11      |
|   | Total    | 27      | 33          | 24      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 79 (63) | 97 (74)     | 71 (89) |
|   | 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 | 16    | 19    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results                      |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at National Curriculum level 4 and above | Boys     | 14      | 8           | 13      |
|  | Girls    | 18      | 17          | 17      |
|  | Total    | 32      | 25          | 30      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above                | School   | 91 (94) | 71 (76)     | 86 (82) |
|  | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69)     | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments                                      |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at National Curriculum level 4 and above | Boys     | 13      | 9           | 14      |
|  | Girls    | 17      | 17          | 17      |
|  | Total    | 30      | 26          | 31      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above                | School   | 86 (85) | 74 (73)     | 89 (79) |
|  | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69)     | 80 (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                          | 40           |
| Pakistani                       | 93           |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 0            |
| White                           | 68           |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 6            |

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

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

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

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

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

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

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 11.6 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 21.6 |
| Average class size                       | 34.0 |

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

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 10.0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 195  |

### ***Financial information***

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year                             | 1999-2000 |
|  | £         |
| Total income                               | 425,864   |
| Total expenditure                          | 423,947   |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 1,782     |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 60,573    |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 62,490    |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 238 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 136 |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 60             | 37            | 2                | 1                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 56             | 38            | 2                | 0                 | 4          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 54             | 43            | 0                | 1                 | 2          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 46             | 41            | 8                | 3                 | 2          |
| The teaching is good.  | 63             | 35            | 1                | 0                 | 1          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 50             | 39            | 7                | 1                 | 3          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 63             | 31            | 3                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 70             | 27            | 1                | 1                 | 1          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 58             | 34            | 6                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 73             | 22            | 1                | 1                 | 3          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 62             | 33            | 2                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 59             | 28            | 6                | 1                 | 6          |

## **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. The initial assessment on entry shows that children enter the reception class with skills and understanding below those normally found for children of this age. A considerable percentage is entirely dependent on their home language, and the majority has English as an additional language. All children make good progress due to the good quality of teaching in all six areas of learning, the high level of co-operation between the teacher and her support assistants, and an effective balance between the use of the home language and English.

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

70. By the end of the Reception Year, children are on line to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. Good planning and skilful teaching underpin the good progress being made with consistent routines and high expectations for appropriate behaviour. Staff are very clear and precise about what children will do, particularly when involved in practical activities. As a result, although children share resources and are becoming increasingly sensitive to each other's needs, there are limited opportunities for them to initiate their own learning. They listen intently, are enthusiastic learners, concentrate hard, and follow the good examples that the Reception staff provide. Adults treat the children courteously, listen to them carefully and, with the help of the bilingual assistant's effective parallel use of English and home languages, all are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions.

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

71. The quality of provision and teaching is good, overall. By the end of the Reception Year a considerable proportion of the children will achieve the early learning goals, but, for a significant minority, the challenge of talking and writing in English will still be a major issue. Children enjoy listening to stories, and the regular telling of a story in two languages, or with a quiet home-language commentary, enables all children to join equally in this learning. Stimulating 'story sacks', providing illustrated reading opportunities, increase the pleasure for all, whilst enabling those with English as an additional language to participate to a greater extent. For example, a child confidently mimicked an adult's actions by holding a book and sharing it as if with an imaginary audience. All children are becoming aware of a book's structure, the title and author, and some are beginning to recognise words and phrases.
72. Staff, systematically introduce a letter sound each week and link this closely with handwriting; this is developing the beginnings of a joined script. Handwriting skills progress well, but often the subject and the purpose of copying a sentence that includes this selected letter at the start of a word (even when they have suggested it themselves) is not really of genuine interest to them. From the children's perspective, the 'purpose and message' is not uppermost. In contrast, they shared with interest in writing a 'thank-you' letter to the fire-fighters who brought the fire engine to school. This type of activity is more likely to generate a spontaneous desire to write, particularly if a regular exchange of letters can be organised.

73. Adults use speech effectively. Children hear clearly pronounced words that link to their topic, task, or instruction, repeatedly. Often the home language word is also offered. This provides a valuable model. However, children often work silently, and their own use of these words and other language to direct and comment on their on-going efforts, or their use of language to create simple scenarios or to describe their play, is far less evident.

### **Mathematical development**

74. Children are making good progress, particularly in the development of their number skills. Most of children are achieving the early learning goals, and some will exceed them by the age of five.
75. Reception staff make good use of a range of opportunities which arise naturally to engage children in number work. For example, the bilingual assistant, using both the home language and English, helped the children to count the wheels in pictures of fire engines before they started on their own paintings. Staff develop the children's interest well, and ensure a lot of participation by focusing learning on number games with dice, cards, number washing lines, and interesting natural materials such as conkers to sort and count. Children are excited, listen intently, and participate actively in the class counting activities. They are confident. They counted numbers up to and back from 20 as the 'swinging fire-fighter' swung from side to side; this was a nice touch. They counted together in twos, and a few confident individuals stood up and managed this exercise extremely well by themselves.
76. The children explore shapes, compare size and are encouraged to look for patterns when recreating and extending sequences. Staff are assiduous in using the correct mathematical vocabulary. This helps all children to develop an understanding, but it is of particular importance for those for whom English is an additional language. Again the home language is used in parallel, and this is one of the reasons why progress in mathematics is good. Increasingly, children are encouraged to use their mathematical knowledge to solve simple problems, and, as they compare numbers, they are working towards an understanding of practical addition and subtraction.

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

77. At the end of the Reception Year, children are likely to have achieved the early learning goals for this area of learning.
78. It was sensible, in the children's first term in school, to focus many activities around the topic 'Myself'. This enabled staff to draw on family experiences and share these together to develop early concepts in history and geography. At the same time, they introduced and developed important everyday vocabulary about their bodies - particularly for children speaking English as an additional language. Children are encouraged to investigate, and the school's attractive grounds offer many opportunities for them to observe changes taking place in nature. The natural objects that they collect are also used for creative and mathematical learning. A lot of investigation about fire-fighters took place, and the visit of the fire engine was instrumental in helping them to think about how things work, and ask questions about 'why', 'how', and 'what if'. This exploration flowed logically into all the other five areas of learning.

79. Staff make effective use of the digital camera to record, not only particular events, but also examples of children deeply engrossed in practical activities. They use these photographs to encourage the children to recall, reflect, and sequence events. Tactile experiences with sand and water also extend the children's understanding of many scientific concepts. Individual children were comfortable and confident as they responded with delight when interacting with a computer program. The range of backgrounds of both children and adults is a rich resource, and is used well to develop an understanding of different faiths and cultures.

### **Physical development**

80. Children are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals in this area by the end of the Reception year.. They have regular opportunities to play outside, to use, sit on, and ride wheeled toys, and have access to the hall for dance and music, as well as to the school gymnasium. This variety in provision is a positive factor in the children's good progress in developing their co-ordination and their physical skills. Staff commented on how quickly children have developed a concept of space. They demonstrated an awareness of the way other children would need to use space when they took part in a movement session exploring a story through actions. When they needed to lie on the floor, there was no crowding together, but rather, thoughtful positioning of their bodies, so that they didn't bump each other.
81. Staff use praise very effectively and, as always, the parallel use of the home language and English ensures that all children quickly and confidently benefit from the provision for physical development. There are ample resources available to develop an appropriate range of skills, with small equipment such as balls and hoops, as well as larger apparatus to develop an imaginative approach to climbing and balancing.
82. Children show good control in handling tools such as scissors and brushes, and pencil control is very well established.

### **Creative development**

83. Children are likely to achieve most of the early learning goals in this area by the time they leave the Reception class. Every child looked at pictures of fire engines, discussed what they saw and then produced large, bold, and highly recognisable representations. This aspect of their work illustrates good development. Over time, photographs show that they are introduced to a range of techniques and experiences with colour, but there is less evidence of them freely choosing to develop their own ideas. The current layout of the under-fives space does not give children opportunities to explore such experiences whenever they wish.
84. The Foundation Stage has the advantage of a room for role-play and construction, but when both activities are on offer the space for both is limited, and stored resources further limit the play area. The 'doctor's surgery' interested the children, and they were keen to point out their drawings of skeletons. When observed, the children seemed to find it difficult to collaborate purposefully by taking on roles or by creating an imaginative story. Some enthusiastically wrote letter shapes in the books provided, but this did not arise out of need to make an appointment or write a prescription.

85. The children enjoy music, and show a good understanding of tempo - moving quickly or slowly in response to the music. A considerable majority of the children recognise and clap a simple rhythm.
86. The good progress made by children in the Reception class, including those with special educational needs, results from the good teaching available to them. This is supported very well by the skilful use of the nursery nurse and the bilingual assistant. Adults ensure that the children feel secure and valued, so that they develop confidence as they increase their knowledge in the areas of learning, and develop the skills they will need to begin their work on the National Curriculum. The school has maintained the good provision for children under the age of five that was noted when it was first inspected.

## **ENGLISH**

87. Standards in English are good. In 2000 at the end of Key Stage 2, the results in the National Curriculum tests in English showed the school to be above the average for all schools, and well above the standards achieved in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. The school far exceeded its agreed targets for attainment at level 4. The percentage that attained the higher level 5 was slightly above the national average. Within that result, the performance in writing is particularly strong, with boys performing better than the national average.
88. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of Year 2 pupils attaining level 2 or above was below the national average in reading and writing. However, the percentage attaining the higher level 3, was close to the national average in reading, and well above the national average in writing. Attainment in reading was above that achieved in similar schools, in writing it was well above that of similar schools. At both key stages the strength in writing is notable. Most pupils throughout the key stages write well, with the strength in writing suggesting that this skill's importance has been maintained since the last inspection.
89. The school has successfully addressed all the issues raised by the previous two inspections, and there has been a good improvement in standards. Teachers have successfully analysed test results, and carefully monitor the progress made by all pupils, particularly the very high percentage who speak English as an additional language. All teachers systematically carry out formal and informal assessment procedures at regular intervals, applying clearly defined and agreed criteria. The outcomes of these assessments are used for the setting and further assessment of clearly defined objectives. This in turn has underpinned the carefully focused teaching of writing skills, which is consistently and imaginatively implemented across the school.
90. A high percentage of pupils enter Key Stage 1 with a rudimentary command of English; in this context, they make good progress in this subject, particularly in their writing. The pairing of two teachers for the Literacy Hour, together with the careful deployment of language and classroom assistants and support from parent helpers, are key factors in this progress. Throughout the school, pupils and staff negotiate specific targets for reading and writing which are constantly monitored, enabling pupils to measure their own progress and identify both strengths and weaknesses in their work.

91. Attainment in English is average at the end of Key Stage 1, and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. At the end of both key stages, speaking and listening are satisfactory. The listening element is stronger than the speaking at Key Stage 1, with many pupils still seeking to find an appropriate range of English vocabulary. Bilingual assistants, using the home languages, enable all pupils to participate in the full range of the curriculum in English. By the time they are seven, the majority of pupils talk confidently to each other and familiar adults, but are not always easy to understand when they try to express themselves at length.
92. This pattern continues throughout Key Stage 2. All staff are consistently attentive to the language that they use, enabling all pupils to hear clearly enunciated phrases, but opportunities to speak at length and participate in discussion, as opposed to providing short, factual answers to questions, are more limited. Although pupils are encouraged to say what something means, they have less opportunity to explain and justify their thinking at length. However, a particular success is the attention to hearing, understanding and using the technical, subject-specific vocabulary. At the end of the key stage, pupils confidently use words such as 'synonym', 'metaphor' and 'imaginary' as they explored how a writer evoked a mood.
93. Standards in reading are average at the end of both key stages. However, in both classes in Key Stage 1, there are a number of pupils whose reading attainment is held back by their inadequate command of English. These pupils are making good progress and they are trying hard to achieve well. An understanding of letters and sound is taught very effectively. From an early stage, pupils use these strategies with understanding when they meet new words. All, whatever their level of competence, are interested in stories, interpret the pictures with care, and show in their response to books that they understand that the meaning is important. They confidently point out the title and author. The class shares a big book or text daily, and all understand the importance of looking closely at the text, and thinking about what it means. Year 2 pupils, exploring the correct use of 'was' and 'were' enthusiastically read 'The Holiday Diary', working out whether the words the teacher had covered up were 'was or were'. As their language skills increase, it is clear that they are developing a sound understanding of letters and sounds, and are becoming increasingly effective in applying appropriate strategies to enable them to work out new words. The guided reading group sessions, which are carefully planned and evaluated, are instrumental in developing this understanding, but, in their individual reading, the books allocated are not always sufficiently challenging. The 'Better Reading Partners' project provides additional useful support for selected pupils.
94. Pupils continue to make sound progress at Key Stage 2. They read a mixture of fiction and non-fiction, and many pupils read with good expression and understanding. The majority read fluently and confidently, responding to texts at a literal level although, here again, the chosen books are often insufficiently challenging. Teachers expect pupils to read, reflect on, and work out the meaning of instructions on work sheets. An analysis of strengths and weaknesses has highlighted the need to develop a greater depth of understanding. Year 6 pupils made considerable progress in understanding how an author evoked a mood. They were able to identify the range of strategies that the author of 'Moondial' used, and consolidated this understanding by using similar strategies in their own writing.
95. The systematic emphasis and encouragement to read non-fiction, and the study of how to use libraries and to seek information effectively from texts, is good. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently explained how to make use of the computerised classification system, and excitedly explained how they could type in a subject that they wanted to investigate, and the computer would list the relevant books. These

pupils understand how to skim and scan and are used to searching for and listing information. The range of books in the newly established library is good, and pupils are keen to borrow books. Common to all pupils who read to inspectors, was an interest and delight in books, though some of them, whilst explaining that their target was to read more information texts, confessed to a preference for fiction. Many have favourite authors and select books with discrimination.

96. Standards in writing at the end of both key stages are better than would normally be expected given the pupils' speaking and reading skills. This reflects the enthusiasm and interest that teachers across the two key stages have for writing, and their understanding of the ways in which confidence and skills can be developed. The school has moved to the use of joined writing from the Reception class onwards, and selected an approach to developing spelling that they feel works well for their pupils. The links between analysing spelling patterns and working out the pronunciation and meaning of unfamiliar words are carefully structured across the years, and understanding is developed systematically.
97. Key Stage 1 pupils already demonstrate good confidence and maturity in trying spellings for themselves, make effective use of the structured support available to them, and work quickly and efficiently onto paper. From an early stage they are helped to use appropriate strategies to check and edit their work. The school has carefully thought through how it is using the time in the Literacy Hour, and harnessed the potential for writing for different purposes in other subjects. Staff make very good use of supports such as storyboards. Thus pupils have good opportunities to write, and their growing confidence and skills enable them to implement their intentions.
98. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress. Having previously identified the characteristics of a sentence, Year 4 pupils enjoyed manipulating a collection of words in order to create a different sentence. They found that they could combine the words in slightly different ways whilst still ensuring that each example was meaningful. This practical manipulation enabled them to consolidate their editing skills, and modified the punctuation as necessary. They learn to appreciate the forms associated with different forms of writing, for example, stories, letters, how to present an argument, write newspaper reports, and poetry. The latter, often of high quality, is shared through display or read to the assembled school as part of worship. The pupils' grammatical understanding is impressive. It is achieved through work with extended texts. Sometimes, to illustrate a focus, it might be written by a member of staff, or, at other times, a pupil's text is used. Great sensitivity is shown so that the chosen text is used in an entirely positive way. Good handwriting, together with accurate spelling and punctuation, results in well-presented work. However, evidence of the use of the computers' word processing facility to develop skills of editing and redrafting is limited.
99. The quality of teaching is consistent across the whole school. It is always at least satisfactory, good in more than two thirds of lessons and, on occasions, excellent. The strengths lie in the knowledge and understanding of how to approach the subject, particularly in the development of writing. Two teachers working as a well-integrated team, staff every Literacy Hour. Their joint planning is detailed; objectives are carefully identified, and the elements of text, word, and sentence study are well integrated. A simple format is used effectively across the whole school. The implementation of this format is both systematic and imaginative, with due attention being paid to enabling all groups of pupils to make maximum progress in their learning. Thus pupils are never asked to write in a particular way before they have been introduced to the appropriate strategies, and have discussed a related model. The tasks are never restricting or closed. Guided reading sessions enable pupils to

find out how to explore and interact with texts, and it was noteworthy that pupils selected randomly, talked happily about how they had been teasing out information about characters in a story, or an author's use of descriptive language. At all times teachers make sure that pupils recall and reflect on their previous knowledge, and use this as a springboard for exploring new frontiers. This successful teaching enables pupils across the key stages, including those with special educational needs, and English as an additional language, to make good progress in their learning.

100. The National Literacy Hour is well established. Teachers are following its guidance and have taken its strengths and interpreted them imaginatively, matching them well to the needs of these pupils. Group work benefits from the number of class and language assistants and parents, carefully supported by the teaching staff. The literary texts are used well, together with published materials such as Additional Literacy Support; this is used judiciously to support some pupils at a transitional stage. Teachers design their own teaching materials, and all the worksheets are carefully constructed to be motivating, closely matched to the lesson objective, and related to the texts used. They are graded for different groups of pupils, and well structured to provide shape and guidance; however, they are also always open-ended. Plenary sessions are well structured and effectively pull together and clarify the lesson objectives. Although in most sessions individuals used a computer, information and communication technology is not yet making a significant impact on learning for the majority. Pupils support each other at times during the individual work, but seldom have the opportunity to discuss and shape an argument as a group.
101. The co-ordinator has tackled the organisation of the subject with flair, imagination, and enthusiasm, and her leadership of the subject is very good. The subject is well resourced. Much of the success in writing stems from the opportunity to write for different purposes identified in the detailed cross-curricular matrix. She monitors planning, is able to advise and support colleagues, and, together with the English as an additional language and assessment co-ordinators, uses the many assessment procedures to identify areas for further development in subject knowledge, and to track the progress made in English by individual pupils throughout the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

102. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, in mathematics, 71 per cent of the school's pupils attained the national expectation of level 4 at least, compared with 75 per cent of pupils nationally. However, only 11 per cent of the school's pupils attained the higher level 5, compared with the national figure of 24 per cent. This means that, overall, the attainment of the school's pupils in mathematics was below the national average. Wensley Fold's pupils matched the standards attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. In 2000, girls outperformed boys in the National Curriculum tests, but there is no evidence to suggest that this is part of a trend. Since the school's first inspection in 1995, the rate of improvement in attainment in mathematics for pupils aged 11 has been better than the national trend.
103. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, 97 per cent of the school's pupils attained at least the national expectation of level 2, compared with 90 per cent nationally. Of these pupils, 24 per cent attained the higher level 3 compared with 25 per cent nationally. This level of attainment was broadly in line with the national average, but well above the average attained in similar schools and above the average for the local authority. There was little difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The attainment of seven-year-olds in mathematics has improved well since the school's first inspection.

104. A significant reason for this good level of improvement at Key Stage 1 is the very high level of support provided in numeracy lessons. At Key Stage 1, all numeracy lessons benefit from a support teacher in addition to the class teacher, as well as good numbers of support assistants. This means that work can be carefully targeted at pupils of different levels of attainment. This also means that different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning.
105. In Key Stage 2, support teachers are not available for numeracy lessons as they are in literacy lessons. This is one reason why attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 continues to lag behind attainment in English, particularly at the higher level 5. A further reason is that, in English, opportunities to practise particular types of writing are identified specifically in the cross-curricular matrix. Similar opportunities to practise mathematics in subjects such as science, design and technology and geography are not identified in this way. While pupils of all levels of attainment continue to make sound progress in their learning, they are starting from a lower level, and so do not attain as well as in English.
106. Number is the strongest element in mathematics learning in the school. Throughout the key stages, pupils have good mental skills in numerical calculations. The skilful use of the mental mathematics element by teachers in numeracy lessons is reinforcing and extending pupils' knowledge and understanding in this key skill.
107. By the age of seven, attainment is at the national average. Pupils have a secure understanding of odd and even numbers, and recognise numbers into four figures. They recognise that number sequences have patterns, for example, that counting in threes will produce odd and even numbers alternately. They confidently sequence numbers to 100, multiply accurately by two, three, five and ten, and divide by two and three. They apply their knowledge of addition and subtraction to money, and have a good understanding of simple fractions. They know how to measure in centimetres, and how to tell the time in hours. They understand how data can be represented by tally charts and bar graphs. They know the basic two-dimensional shapes, and have a rudimentary understanding of symmetry.
108. By the age of 11, attainment, as seen during the inspection, matches the national average. This is an improvement on the results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests. Pupils are secure in their use of the four rules of number - addition, subtraction, multiplication and division - in thousands. They have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages, and how they are linked. They accurately measure length and capacity. They understand that data can be portrayed in bar graphs, line graphs and in such representations as pie charts, and know how to extract information from such pictorial representations. They understand how negative numbers work in such measures as temperature charts. Their knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes is secure, and they understand how triangles are categorised, and how to measure their angles. They calculate the areas and perimeters of shapes by using the appropriate formulae. They plot co-ordinates successfully and understand why shapes are or are not symmetrical. There is good coverage of the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum.
109. Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics, and behave well in lessons. They work with interest and sustained concentration, enjoying the challenge of mathematics. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and their teachers and other adults are good, and pupils respect each other's ideas and contributions. They show good initiative in tackling new work and in reinforcing their knowledge and understanding of

previous learning. These good attitudes result from the care which teachers take to make lessons stimulating and interesting. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils' understanding of odd and even numbers was reinforced by a number rhyme, and then further reinforced by a song. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and a secure appreciation of the principles of numeracy. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully, and is having a positive effect on standards. Lesson planning is good, and resources for learning are used well. Lessons have good pace, they move forward so that pupils' interest is maintained, but time is taken to ensure that new work is securely understood. Classes are very well managed. In the best lessons, pupils and adults are united in the joy of learning, and the process of managing pupils is virtually unnoticed. The quality of teaching is good overall in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In three-quarters of the lessons observed in Key Stage 1 teaching was good, and, in the other quarter, was very good. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching in half the lessons was very good, in one quarter, it was good, and in the other quarter was satisfactory. Very good lessons are characterised by challenging work, carefully graded for different groups of pupils, a brisk pace, and effective use of praise and humour. This results in good quality learning. In the satisfactory lesson, some unclear explanations meant that part of the learning was insecure.

110. The mathematics co-ordinator manages the subject efficiently. She has a good understanding of the current strengths within the subject, and of the areas for development, for example, the need for more software so that information and communication technology can support learning in mathematics more effectively. She analyses the results in the National Curriculum tests carefully, and so has a good understanding of which areas need extra attention. She monitors planning and some lessons, and has a good appreciation of the quality of teaching and learning throughout the key stages. She carefully identifies pupils who need extra support so that they can make better progress in their learning, and the school then provides that support.
111. The subject has improved well since the school was first inspected, and the school is now in a good position to go on to improve further.

## **SCIENCE**

112. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are making good progress in their rate of learning. Their standards of work are in line with the national average being achieved by pupils at the ages of both seven and eleven.
113. Standards of attainment are steadily rising throughout the school, especially at Key Stage 2, and are keeping pace with the upward trend for better standards that is being seen nationally. The results for the year 2000 in the National Curriculum assessments show that attainment at Key Stage 1 matches the national average. At Key Stage 2, attainment in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 was below the national average, but evidence from lesson observations supports the school's predictions for a continued upward trend for the year 2001.
114. The inspection report of June 1995 required the school to raise standards in science at Key Stage 1. The subsequent report of November 1998 found standards to be rising, but it remained a key issue to continue to raise standards. Present findings, supported by National Curriculum test results, confirm that this has been addressed successfully. Following the inspection in 1998, the school carefully studied its curriculum and its teaching and planning of science. The changes that the school

adopted after this review have improved the quality of teaching and learning well.

115. Throughout the school pupils are learning well, and acquiring sound knowledge and understanding of the subject. There is good development of scientific skills because of a well thought-out curriculum, and an emphasis upon pupils investigating and discovering things for themselves. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress at the same rate as other pupils. Much of the success is brought about through the first class support given by teachers and the school's well-qualified support workers. This is made possible by management's very good organisation of teaching and support staff, and by the planning of the teachers, which ensures that the needs of all pupils are met. The same factors have a very favourable impact on the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs, whose carefully planned work is both realistic and challenging. The quality of support that these pupils receive is, at times, excellent.
116. Pupils learn through a wide range of topics that incorporate the Programmes of Study from the National Curriculum. The very good emphasis that the school places on investigative and experimental work helps pupils to gain knowledge and understanding in a systematic way. This is making very significant contributions to the good progress in learning that is taking place in pupils of all ages. Most pupils recall, reflect on, and explain their work effectively, and most show a satisfactory level of understanding for their age. Science supports, and is supported well by, most other areas of the curriculum. However, the quality and frequency of use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped.
117. In the Year 1 class pupils study our senses. The display in the classroom of things to feel and things to smell illustrates the importance that the school places upon practical experience for pupils. Investigations and personal experience are very much part of the Year 2 work on electricity in which pupils make a circuit and discover how a switch operates. In another lesson pupils were required to test various forms of wrapping paper, and find out which one was best for sending a parcel through the post. Good teaching ensured that they understood the criteria upon which to form their opinion. Pupils were able to work in this practical way through the good organisation and planning of the teacher. They co-operated well with each other, and behaved well in a situation where sharing and listening to each other's point of view was very important to the success of the lesson. By the time these pupils have reached the end of Key Stage 1, they will have had good opportunities to learn facts and skills, which will provide them with a solid foundation for their work in Key Stage 2. The progress of Year 3 pupils is apparent in the growing ability of higher achieving pupils to use books to research for themselves. Well-planned activities involving observing and grouping a variety of rocks was challenging to all, and additional challenge was given to higher attaining pupils. For lower attaining pupils, the work was similar but matched to their ability. Through such careful planning, all pupils were able to achieve in line with their own abilities, and make good progress in their learning.
118. No lessons were observed in Year 4, but evidence from pupils' past work shows that knowledge and skills continue to develop well. There is a growing requirement to form and write conclusions to their investigations. In Year 5, following study and experimentation with sounds, and how they are made, pupils wrote up their findings in narrative style. This is an example of how work in science enhances literacy skills by writing in the style of reports. The work seen in Year 6 provided opportunity for skills and knowledge which have been progressively learned to be put to good effect. Pupils understood the process of investigation and testing, and the need to make a 'fair test'. Their ability to write findings and conclusions to their work has improved.

Pupils are capable of research, and there is evidence of some independent working in the very good and well-presented individual topics they complete over a term as a homework project. This work is valued by the teachers, and the effort the pupils have put into their topics is acknowledged and appreciated. These topics are a good illustration of parents' involvement in their children's learning, and they appreciate the opportunities that these projects provide.

119. Teaching in science throughout the school is always at least satisfactory and, more often, good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. All teachers have good understanding and knowledge of the subject, and their planning shows high expectations for what their pupils will achieve. They work very well as a team, and this enables them to accommodate the needs of different groups of pupils well. This attention to detail ensures that pupils work hard, concentrate, and enjoy their work. A strong feature of teaching is the way in which teachers ensure that all pupils know what they are expected to learn. Furthermore, there is very good emphasis on pupils understanding the vocabulary associated with the lesson. Assessment procedures are good, and are put to good use by making sure that what has been taught has been understood and remembered. Where the quality of learning is not as the teacher expects, time and opportunities are provided to rectify this.
120. The subject continues to develop well, and the school is clear as to what it needs to do in the future in order to build further upon the good progress that has been made.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

121. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those expected for their age at the end of both key stages. The work on display with pastels, newspaper collages and portraits, is good. It was only possible to observe one art lesson during the inspection.
122. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. They explore a wide range of media, and consider examples of artistic styles from across the world, as well as the techniques of a number of western artists. They are encouraged to use these styles in their own work, thus creating something original, rather than poor copies. The syllabus ensures that there is some opportunity for three-dimensional work, but, as this is planned for later in the year, there was no visual evidence during the inspection. The school has the materials with which to work in three dimensions. The computer-generated graphics are colourful, and reveal a sound ability to use a range of tools to achieve a clear intention.
123. Key Stage 1 pupils explore and make effective use of colour. This is stimulated by the work of Modrian. The Year 1 display in the hall entitled 'Tints of Blue' is striking, whilst Year 2 pupils' examination of Van Gogh's cypresses is a refreshing change from the ubiquitous sunflowers. The range of work produced by the seven-year-olds illustrates their growing confidence with pastels, printing techniques, and cut-out effects. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in their drawing skills. Years 3 and 4 have tackled landscape, working on black and white charcoal and pencil designs of 'winter days' and 'trees in winter'. Other landscapes demonstrated their increasing ability to achieve subtle shading effects with pastels. It is Year 5's fish and winter collages that stand out, illustrating how one particular medium can be effectively exploited in different ways. Year 6 portraits illustrate that pupils have developed good drawing and technical skills over the key stage.
124. Pupils are pleased to talk about their artistic endeavours but there was almost no

opportunity to judge the quality of teaching at either key stage, or to see pupils in the process of creation. This is because art and design and technology often have to alternate in the timetable. Planning illustrates that all staff have a clear idea of what they wish the pupils to learn, and that this is broken down effectively into a series of sessions, building on skills and understanding of the previous week. Review and reflection is an important element in the development of artwork. The co-ordinator has just introduced sketchbooks, which will accompany pupils throughout the school. She believes that this will help pupils and staff to appreciate further the need to build on techniques, and make it easier to gauge the progress achieved. Her intention is to develop displays, with a common theme incorporating examples from each year group; she feels that this will increase teachers' and pupils' awareness of progress.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

125. Standards match national expectations for pupils' ages at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress. The issue raised at the previous inspection of limited design and evaluation skills is still a factor, although some progress has been made. At both key stages pupils learn to plan and carry out their 'design and make' projects through a series of guided activities.
126. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and experience a variety of 'design and make' activities utilising a range of materials and skills. For example, Year 1 pupils explored how to create jointed figures by using split pins. They are currently producing bricks from play dough and, as a result of looking at how walls are constructed, are building their own versions. Year 2 pupils are engaged in working out how to make wheeled vehicles. They started with construction kits and then moved onto building 'peg' chassis with card wheels. These simple wooden constructions involve the use of hacksaws, glue guns and hand drills, as well as an understanding of the need to improve pupils' measuring and cutting skills. The results show that pupils are prepared to take the time to produce well-finished articles. The structured guidance helps them to talk about how they will design their

vehicle. Pupils' draw pictures of their intentions, but still have a limited understanding of the importance of detail and accuracy. Time is inadequate and opportunities to evaluate and modify are sometimes rushed.

127. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment are satisfactory, largely because of the care and enthusiasm with which they approach their projects, and the range of tools and materials that they use. Year 3 pupils are working with clay, and Year 4 are developing a wall hanging linking their history study with an exploration of the versatility of textiles as a creative media. Time and effort is put into helping pupils to disassemble appropriate objects or examine them carefully, in order to see how they are constructed. Thus, Year 6 pupils thoughtfully examined a number of soft toys and, with help from the teacher, identified and listed the important features. Year 5 pupils are tackling a design for a boat, which will show how the propeller will be attached and powered by an elastic band. The quality of the designs is disappointing, and this makes it hard for pupils to produce appropriate templates to guide their accurate cutting of chosen materials. It is not evident that teacher expectations increase year by year through the key stage, or that time is spent improving these features.
128. Pupils throughout the school enjoy the challenge of design and technology. They share ideas, discuss sensibly, and show a healthy willingness to experiment. They are proud of their efforts and recall with pleasure previous 'design and make' activities.
129. In the few lessons observed, the quality of teaching at both key stages was at least satisfactory and, in half the lessons it was good. Staff plan carefully, and work effectively with the large classes to enable pupils to use tools safely and carefully. However, teachers feel the need to move fairly quickly to the actual making stage. They are very successful in ensuring that pupils are absolutely clear about what they will learn from each session, and, within the context of individual projects, help pupils to recall and use knowledge and skills from the week before. However, they have only limited awareness of the standards achieved previously. They successfully help pupils to stand back, reflect, and consider how to produce a well-finished product. The time-tabled time for design and technology is limited. Usually staff ensure that some time is available to discuss improvements in the approach and use of materials.
130. The co-ordinator is keen to develop teachers' skills. They are not always aware of the standards achieved in other schools and this has implications for setting expectations. At the moment all staff and pupils celebrate the end products, but the opportunity to look critically at the potential for refining the design systematically throughout the school is not addressed. Computer skills are insufficiently advanced to enable pupils to incorporate control elements into their designs.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

131. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards of attainment in geography are in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above those normally found. Since it was not possible to see geography taught at Key Stage 1, these judgements are based upon analysis of pupils' past work, teachers' planning, and speaking with pupils. A judgement upon the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 cannot be made, although the outcomes of teaching in the work completed indicate that it is at least satisfactory. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, learn and make progress at the same rate as the others. They achieve well in line with their differing abilities. This comes

about through the quantity and the high quality of the support they are given.

132. It is natural for young children to start work in geography which is based upon their near and familiar environment. By the time they have reached the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils have learned about some of the buildings which are part of their locality, and have developed a vocabulary to describe physical features and places such as mountains, the countryside, and the seaside. This understanding and knowledge of the wider world is considerably enhanced by the travels of Wensley and Waseema Bear. Through the travels of these two teddy bears, pupils find out about, and answer questions about, places like Rome, Lanzarote, Barbados and Turkey. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic, and it is such strategies like these that ensure that pupils develop good attitudes to the subject.
133. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have continued to progress well in their acquisition of knowledge, use of geographical skills, and in using and understanding specialist geographical vocabulary.
134. Curriculum arrangements were such that no geography was being taught in Year 3 during the inspection. There is, however, ample evidence of past work to show the good development of curriculum and learning that takes place throughout Years 3 and 4. Pupils recognise and locate on a map, England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern and Southern Ireland. They successfully compare conditions and climate in Blackburn with a village in India. They learn how climate affects the way of life and how schools are different in the two contrasting places. Geographical skills are developed well, for example, pupils use a street map with good understanding to indicate their way to school, and they collect evidence from a traffic survey. There is some good cross-curricular work in the focus that is given to Egypt, when, alongside a geographical study, the study of history also takes place. Very good learning skills are evident in the Year 5 pupils' work with Ordnance Survey Maps in which they show a good understanding of symbols and of the use of six figure grid references. During a lesson seen in Year 5, pupils worked with a teacher and older pupils of the High School, learning to understand and use a compass. Pupils set a compass successfully and show good attainment inasmuch as they read a map or plan from which they locate points. This involves excellent use of the school's grounds, which are rich in opportunities to develop both geographical and historical investigative skills. The lesson seen in Year 6 was a further demonstration of the very good use of outside agencies, this time a Groundwork team, who led the pupils to explore waste, and realise that packaging forms such a large part of our waste. The pupils enjoyed very good learning opportunities in which the majority understood the importance of recycling to protect natural resources. They learned how they could help to make our world more green.
135. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is sound. Teachers plan well and deliver an interesting and stimulating curriculum. They are careful to develop skills alongside knowledge, and good and regular assessment takes place after each topic to analyse the learning that has taken place. It naturally follows that from a good and varied curriculum supported by consistent teaching, pupils' interest, behaviour, and attitudes to the subject are also good.

136. In the inspection report of November 1998, standards were found to be in line with expectations, the quality of learning and the quality of teaching was sound, and pupils had positive attitudes. Present findings show that the school has made good progress and has improved upon these previous judgements.

## **HISTORY**

137. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is in line with national expectations, and pupils achieve and learn well.
138. Throughout both key stages, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make progress in their learning at the same rate as other pupils. This is made possible by the quality of support they are given and the specially adapted work prepared for them by their teachers.
139. Pupils enjoy a varied and stimulating curriculum in which they learn to understand the changes that have taken place over time. They develop the vocabulary associated with the subject well. Good use is made of primary source material. For example, a lesson in Year 2 used artefacts obtained from the museum service; pupils learned that these are real things and that they must treat them with respect and care. The teacher planned the lesson well, and there was very good adult support to lead groups of pupils in their discussions concerning what the objects were, and what was their use. Some objects, such as an old iron, are obvious, but from these objects pupils see how the basic design, although remaining the same, has been improved in subsequent years. Other objects, such as a butter pat, are less obvious and to discover their use provided appropriate challenge for all pupils. The context of the lesson allowed the quality of good behaviour to be seen in the way in which pupils shared, took turns, and listened to others' points of view and opinions.
140. At the end of Key Stage 2, the good progress made throughout the school results in standards that are above national expectations. Teaching methods are effective and pupils are left in no doubt as to what it is they are to learn. Pupils in Year 3 understand a little about the Vikings and know where they came from and why they raided our shores. Learning is good and is shown by the accuracy and originality of the comments that many pupils make. Their tasks are carefully explained and there is some evidence of investigative tasks being set, which require pupils to think for themselves. Pupils in Year 4 learn why the River Nile was so important to the Egyptians, and there is evidence of the use of CD-ROM to research such topics as the Egyptians.
141. No lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6, but past work indicates some good quality learning in the Victorian topic studied in Year 5. There is imaginative writing of what it would have been like to have been a navy in 1842, in which the writer showed good understanding of the conditions at that time. This is a very good example of a case in which history is used to enhance skills in literacy. The ability to research and the use of primary evidence is a strong feature of history, with the first-class facilities of the school grounds being excellently used. The work in Year 5 is particularly impressive, and very good progress is common to pupils of all abilities. Similar quality is evident in Year 6, in which pupils clearly understand the significance of the events in Britain since the 1930's. Some work of higher attaining pupils is very good,

and very well illustrated. There is some good use of the computer in word processing and presenting written work to its full advantage. Throughout the school there is very good development of vocabulary which is specialist to history.

142. Teaching throughout the school is good overall. Lessons are well planned and the topics are interesting. A good use of artefacts involves pupils in their learning, and the management of pupils and the quality of support are very good. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and they are enthusiastic. This enthusiasm is shared by the pupils who all show good and interested attitudes.
143. The inspection report of November 1998 found that standards in history were broadly in line with national standards at both key stages. At that time there was some doubt as to whether the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum were being met. This is no longer the case, and there has been a good improvement in standards, especially in Key Stage 2.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

144. The standards being achieved by the majority of pupils at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally. The progress in learning is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. These standards apply to all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
145. The inspection report of June 1995 found standards to be below the national expectation, and that pupils were underachieving. A subsequent report of November 1998 continued to find the need to raise standards in information and communication technology. There has been a great deal of development nationally in information and communication technology since the time of the previous inspections, and the curriculum is now more demanding. The school has made good progress to keep pace with these changes. It has ensured, through the opportunity it provides for its pupils with its very good resources and support, that all pupils are able to make progress.
146. Throughout their time in school, pupils in Key Stage 1 benefit from the school's much better provision for information and communication technology in terms of both hardware and software, and the significant increase in the knowledge and confidence of their teachers. These developments have made sure that skills are progressively learned, and that they are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. By the end of Year 2, pupils work with a satisfactory degree of confidence, using different sizes and styles of font. They are familiar with the keyboard, and most pupils use the icons to access the different functions of the computer. They enjoy using such programs as 'Dazzle' to produce pictures and designs, and many pupils use the programs to create block graphs.
147. Although standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations, they are not as good as Key Stage 1. This is because the older pupils in Year 6 have not benefited from the more progressive curriculum supported by the quality of resources that the school now provides. Many older pupils need to catch up, and, on occasions, the content of older pupils' work is more in line with what might be expected of younger pupils. For example, some older pupils are still learning to use the cut and paste technique, which should have been learned earlier. This is not true of all pupils, but means that some are not fully competent in all areas of study. Most pupils acquire good, useful skills and progress well in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 3 are competent in the use of word processing skills, and produce

sound examples of extended writing. Year 4 pupils recognise that text can be edited and improved. Also in Year 4, there are some good examples where information and communication technology enhances the curriculum for mathematics in the creation of pie charts and line graphs.

148. During Year 5, where more basic skills are secure, pupils learn techniques, which add embellishments and interest to their work, for example, the use of borders and background. They experiment with different graphics, create a variety of images, and learn the use of the digital camera. By Year 6, the majority of pupils are confident users of computers and organise and re-draft text, import images from clip art, and create titles. Such skills are used to produce posters, for example, for the Breakfast Club and the Christmas Fair. Such refinements as the use of bullet points in text are used, and work includes responses to e-mail; read, write, and send.
149. Pupils access an Internet site using 'favourite', use search engines, locate a web page, and print from the Internet.
150. The limited amount of teaching seen in information and communication technology was good. Teachers have a clear scheme of work to guide their planning, and this ensures that lessons are planned that are appropriate to the ability of the pupils, and will take learning and pupil confidence forward. Not all teachers are completely confident with teaching information and communication technology, but confidence is improving. The new suite of computers helps to ensure that there is regular direct teaching of developmental skills. Such periods are well supported by a confident support assistant, engaged solely for this purpose. The good resources are used well; for example, there is regular use of the suite by a homework club, and a parent group who are developing their own computing skills. Pupils are managed well, and care is taken to ensure that all groups of pupils have equal access to computers. Pupils know they are treated fairly, and this helps to maintain their positive and interested attitude.
151. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for two years. He has a realistic view of the curriculum, and of what is necessary for the school to do to improve. At present, due to circumstances explained, the curriculum is not always well matched to the age group in Key Stage 2, but it is well matched to the pupils' stage of learning and ability. Some areas are less strong than others; for example, there is insufficient coverage of control, and insufficient use to support learning in other subjects. The school has the capacity and the determination to continue to develop the subject, and is taking effective steps to improve further.

## **MUSIC**

152. Pupils make good progress in their learning in music in Key Stage 1, and very good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make progress at the same rate as other pupils. The good standards reported in the school's first inspection report have been maintained and built upon. Whole school singing in assemblies is musical and refined. Pupils sing tunefully and with good attention to rhythm and dynamics. Pupils enjoy singing and appreciate the contribution that it makes to school worship.

153. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above that normally found. Pupils understand simple musical notation and can distinguish crotchets from quavers. They clap a rhythm containing crotchets and quavers accurately. They understand the meaning of 'tempo' and tell the difference between fast and slow musical examples. They use different groups of percussion instruments very competently to reinforce different elements in the rhythm of a new song. Attainment is better than is normally found because of the imaginatively planned and challenging learning experiences prepared for them.
154. These very good learning opportunities continue in Key Stage 2. At the end of the key stage, attainment is well above that normally found. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils learned a new song to celebrate Eid. They understand how music is organised into bars and that bars have different numbers of beats. They sing with a good level of accuracy, and reinforce their music making by sensitively building up a percussion accompaniment using different groups of instruments, for example, chime bars, drums, rhythm sticks and Indian bells.
155. Attainment in Key Stage 2 is enhanced for a large number of pupils who learn a musical instrument. Some 23 pupils are learning the recorder, 20 the guitar, and eight the flute. Twelve pupils are learning Asian percussion instruments - six the bodhrin and six the dholak. All these are taught by the school's staff with the exception of the bodhrin which is taught by a visiting specialist. Frequent opportunities to perform on these instruments in assemblies and on other occasions, give these pupils confidence, and also teach them that discipline is required for musical performances to be of good quality.
156. Pupils have very good attitudes to music in both key stages. They work with sustained concentration and real enjoyment. Activities are demanding so that pupils enjoy the challenge of learning and the activities which reinforce their understanding. Pupils show good initiative in their work in music, for example, in the way they managed the different elements of their percussion accompaniment of the newly learned song in the Year 5 lesson. They are courteous to each other and to adults, and respect each other's ideas and contributions to lessons.
157. Music is taught by a specialist throughout the school. The quality of teaching is very good in both key stages. She has very good subject knowledge and expertise, plans meticulously to give pupils throughout the school a rich and wide ranging musical education, and creates interesting and imaginative learning experiences which motivate and excite pupils in both key stages. She has high expectations for her pupils' conduct and application, so that, while lessons are enjoyable, learning is rigorous and thorough. Her management of pupils of different ages is very successful; it is rooted in enjoyment of lessons and the good pace with which lessons proceed, so that interest is maintained.
158. The music specialist's enthusiasm and energy mean that the subject is very effectively managed. Since the school's first inspection, she has reorganised the scheme for teaching and learning, developed a system for assessing progress, and expanded the provision for Asian music. Pupils have unusually rich opportunities for learning and musical experiences. They have opportunities for performance, not only in the school's own concerts, for example, at Christmas and harvest, but also in the local authority's concerts at St George's Hall and Ewood Park. Indeed, it was the Millennium song written within the school which formed the climax of the 2000 concert in St George's Hall.

159. The school has adapted successfully to the demands of 'Curriculum 2000' and has improved well since the last inspection. Resources for learning are good, although there is a shortage of electronic keyboards. The co-ordinator is aware that there is scope for further use of information and communications technology in the music curriculum. In spite of this, music is a strength of the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

160. Standards of attainment in physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages for all groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make sound progress. During the inspection, dance and gymnastics were observed in Key Stage 1, and gymnastics and fitness training at Key Stage 2.
161. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils travel in a variety of ways on different body parts. They understand the difference between large and small body parts, and some are inventive in choosing different modes of travel. In dance, pupils respond well to musical stimuli and to the spoken descriptions of the teacher. They produce some imaginative responses to the scenario based on the movements of toys.
162. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils move competently from hands to feet and some show some original thought in transferring their weight. Some have good techniques when jumping, using arms well and landing smoothly. Others are stiff and awkward, and do not cushion their landing by flexing their knees. Techniques in fitness races varied. Some boys had poor techniques when skipping while girls did well; for some, the reverse was true in ball skills. Levels of fitness vary considerably, but are satisfactory overall. Years 5 and 6 swim as part of their curriculum in physical education, and most meet the national expectation of swimming 25 metres by the end of the key stage.
163. Pupils enjoy their work in physical education, they are co-operative and support each other well. Most behave responsibly and have a good awareness of the need for safety. Most work in physical education takes place in an upstairs gymnasium in a building adjacent to the school. This is a useful facility but far from ideal. It is long and narrow which makes the management of pupils difficult. It is also high, which creates echoes when pupils become excited as a result of the nature of their activities. Waiting for their bursts of excitement to lessen reduces the pace of the lesson and disrupts continuity. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and carefully planned lessons enable pupils to build on and develop previously learned skills. At Key Stage 2, lessons are effectively planned, but opportunities are missed to enable pupils to demonstrate good techniques so that other pupils have the opportunity to evaluate and then try to improve their own work. Teachers have high expectations for pupils, and want their work in physical education to be successful. Extra-curricular clubs are available in a range of activities, and are well supported by pupils. The school uses its extensive grounds well for cross-country practice, and, during the inspection, Year 5 used the grounds in work on compass directions combined with orienteering in a safe environment. Other clubs include basketball, tennis, boys and girls soccer, athletics, netball and cricket. During the inspection, the school achieved a reasonable level of success in the Blackburn Schools' Swimming Association boys' gala. A residential weekend for Year 6 pupils provides an opportunity for outdoor and adventurous activities. The co-ordinator for physical education is enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject. He provides a good range of clubs and activities for pupils in Key Stage 2, and opportunities to experience competitive sport. Resources for the subject are adequate. The sound

standards described in the report from the school's first inspection have been maintained. The school is in a good position to go on to improve further.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

164. Overall, attainment in religious education at the end of both key stages is above that expected for pupils following the locally agreed syllabus, and this is an improvement from the school's first inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress. The school has skilfully blended the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus and the Blackburn Diocesan Syllabus, and, as a result, staff are more comfortable with developing the religious and spiritual aspects of different faiths. This is now a well-balanced programme, and, in the lessons seen, staff teach it well and so have met the recommendations in the previous report successfully.
165. By the age of seven, pupils make interesting comparisons between aspects of Christianity and Islam, and have a developing understanding of the relationship between faith and culture as typified by home life and customs. They are beginning to appreciate that there are many ways in which faith may influence a life style. They also consider thoughtfully both the meaning of prayer and the need to take care of the world.
166. By the age of eleven, pupils have explored the origins and practices of Islam and Christianity in some depth, developing an awareness that the spirituality of religions is a common factor, despite their many differences. Amongst other elements, for example, they look at Buddhist stories, and consider the lives of people who have worked for others, such as Martin Luther King.
167. Teaching is good at both key stages and, of the lessons seen at Key Stage 2, half were very good. This means that learning is a positive process. Staff make great use of practical experience, role-play, and individual pupils' knowledge, wherever possible. The good teaching makes excellent use of both the pupils' own religious heritage, and the willingness of many parents and visitors to demonstrate and explain how aspects of their life are clearly influenced by religion. Year 1 children were fascinated by a demonstration of styles of Islamic clothes, and by explanation, the adults helped them to realise that there are often marked differences and reasons why Muslim women chose to dress in different ways. As part of the celebration of Muslim traditions, typical Asian food was sampled, and relished by nearly everyone. Year 5 teachers made very good use of pupils' own knowledge of the Qur'an, and the rituals attached to its use. Staff achieve high standards through careful planning, which builds on personal experience, and through the use of skilful questioning which encourages pupils to generalise and voice their understanding. Thus all were led to reflect and understand the need to respect and revere the holy books of all religions. The ability to empathise was reflected in Year 4's work on the origins of Buddhism, whilst the support of a practising Buddhist helped the teacher and class to explore the concept that 'all life is suffering'.
168. The experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator has developed a school scheme that provides excellent support for all staff, and which ensures a consistency of approach, and a maximum practical experience throughout the key stages. The school now has access to a valuable supply of religious artefacts. The combination of thoughtful teaching, very good resources, valuable contributions from visitors, and the skilful use of the pupils' own religious knowledge and experiences, means that pupils take great interest in, and are frequently enthralled by, their lessons in religious education, which make an effective contribution to spiritual, moral and cultural development.

