

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

MORECAMBE

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119622

Headteacher: Mr S Thornton

Reporting inspector: David Byrne
28076

Dates of inspection: 13th-16th March 2000

Inspection number: 186540

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Coniston Road
Morecambe
Lancashire

Postcode: LA4 5PS

Telephone number: 01524 413032

Fax number: 01524 425990

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Freeborough

Date of previous inspection: 15th January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Byrne	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Physical Education	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further? Equal Opportunities
Barbara Sinclair,	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jenny Oliver	Team inspector	Under-Fives English Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Iain Johnstone	Team inspector	Geography History	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils?
Susan Russam	Team Inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed? Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school. There are 202 pupils aged from four to 11 taught in seven classes. Although most pupils live within two local parishes, a significant number travel from a considerable distance. The overall socio-economic background of pupils is close to average and the attainment with which pupils begin school is also broadly average. The school caters mostly for children baptised into the Catholic church although it does accept up to 15% of children from non-Catholic homes. Thirty-five pupils (17.5%) are identified as having special educational needs. There are five pupils (2.5%) with statements of special educational needs which is slightly above the national average. Thirty-two pupils (16%) are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average. There are no pupils requiring support for English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils are given a satisfactory standard of education in a caring environment. Satisfactory standards of teaching ensure pupils make progress which is appropriate to their age and ability. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory and the governing body is effective. The school is emerging from a time of instability in staffing which has reduced the pace of change but the Senior Management Team and headteacher are working closely to rectify this situation. The school has an average income and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain good standards in reading and in music
- Pupils acquire good standards of behaviour, good attitudes to learning and develop very good relationships with others
- The school successfully promotes good attendance and low absence
- Children under-five are given a good quality of education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. There is a particular strength in promoting pupils' moral development.
- Pupils' personal and social education is effectively developed.
- A good partnership exists between the school, parents and the community which contributes to the quality of education provided for pupils.
- The governing body is effective particularly in checking on the direction the school is going and in monitoring spending.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology across the school.
- Procedures for checking the standards of teaching and learning across the school and using the information gathered so that where necessary, the quality of teaching and planning is improved.
- The consistency of lesson planning.
- The range, quantity and quality of resources.
- Pupils' independent investigative skills in mathematics and science.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in January 1996 although disruptions in staffing have restricted initiatives to rectify some weaknesses. With the exception of information technology, academic standards have been maintained and the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 has improved and is now entirely satisfactory. The quality of pupils' annual reports is much better and now give a much better picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. A good behaviour policy has been devised and successfully implemented. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved from satisfactory to good with particular strengths in the provision for pupils' social and moral development. The school still has weaknesses in some elements of curriculum planning and although the school development plan is much better, the criteria for checking whether its priorities have been reached are not clear enough. Ways of checking academic standards and the quality of teaching have improved but need to be strengthened further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	A	D	D	well above average above average
mathematics	B	A	D	E	A B C D E
science	A	A	E	E	average below average well below average

The standards attained at the end of Key Stage 2 in the last reported year of 1999 were lower than previous years because of a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The inspection findings are that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are normally close to the national average in English, mathematics and science. The standards reached in reading are better than the national average. In other subjects, there is a strength in pupils' standard of musical performance and in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do as well as they can and make satisfactory progress.

Very little use is made of information technology across the school. As a result, pupils' progress in information technology is unsatisfactory and standards are below what is expected nationally by the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1 is close to the national average. In other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress. Children under-five, have a good start to their school life and reach the targets of the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school life and respond well to their teachers and enjoy learning. Most pupils have good levels of concentration and try hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently good.
Personal development and relationships	A warm and caring school environment results in pupils forming very good relationships between themselves and their teachers.
Attendance	Good, being above the national average and levels of absenteeism are below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
44 lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Pupils benefit from satisfactory teaching with strengths in the teaching of mathematics, English and music. Of 44 lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better in 93% and unsatisfactory in 7%. Almost 60% of lessons were good or very good. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved in Key Stage 1 from often having shortcomings to being entirely satisfactory. There are particular strengths in the teaching of the under-fives. In Key Stage 2, teaching remains satisfactory but there are some variations between classes which impact upon the progress pupils make. Teaching is good in mathematics and satisfactory in English but in science and physical education it varies from being good to unsatisfactory. The teaching of information technology is currently unsatisfactory which contributes to standards which are well below what is expected by the National Curriculum for pupils aged 7 and 11.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. All pupils are taught each subject of the National Curriculum although some elements of information technology are not given enough time. Appropriately, the school places great emphasis upon the teaching of numeracy, literacy and science. The school gives children under-five a good start to their education. The provision for pupils' personal and social education is good and good links with the community add to the quality of the curriculum. Pupils benefit from access to a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory provision makes sure that all pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate support with satisfactory individual programmes for learning.

Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good and a strength of the school. The school successfully provides pupils with a good experiences which develop their social skills and sense of morality.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for looking after pupils and caring for their emotional and physical needs. The procedures used to measure pupils' academic progress however, and the use of information from assessment to find ways of improving teaching or the curriculum, could be better.
How well the school works with parents and carers.	Pupils benefit from good links with parents. Homework is used thoughtfully so that parents can get involved with the education of their children. Good quality information, for example detailed annual reports, keeps parents informed about how well their children are doing and what is going on in all aspects of school life.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and Senior Management Team provide satisfactory leadership and ensure that the school responds satisfactorily to the demands of national initiatives. The pace of change has been slow due to instability in staffing but is now improving.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is a committed and competent guiding group which gives the school good levels of support. Its management of finances is good except in checking the impact of spending upon standards throughout the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school knows its strengths and weaknesses in English, mathematics and science by using the end of key stage National Curriculum assessment data. Ways of checking on the standards of pupils' work and the quality of teaching are, however, not as good as they could be.
The strategic use of resources	The school is well staffed but it spends proportionately more on staffing than similar schools. This results in the a reduction of available resources for learning and reduces the quality of education provided. The school carefully monitors value for money and is aware of the need to improve resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were high levels of parental satisfaction with all aspects of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about homework.

The inspectors agree with the parents' views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Four year olds begin school with standards which are broadly average. By the age of five, children easily reach the expected standards in their language and literacy and their mathematical and creative development. Children also reach the desired levels of knowledge and understanding of the world around them and they make good progress up to the age of five in using the computer. In physical development, progress is satisfactory but a lack of resources restricts the progress made in the development of outdoor physical activities. Personal and social development is well promoted and pupils make good progress in this area.
2. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained in English, mathematics and science and are close to the national average. Progress in these subjects is made at a satisfactory rate across the school but in Key Stage 2, the rate of progress varies greatly depending upon the quality of teaching. In lower Key Stage 2 progress is satisfactory overall in mathematics, English and science but the quality of teaching is at times unsatisfactory. In some aspects of science and physical education progress is unsatisfactory. Progress improves in upper Key Stage 2. Across the school there is a lack of confidence in the teaching of information technology and of practical problem solving work in mathematics and science which results in pupils not making the progress they could in these aspects of mathematics and science and the use of computers.
3. Inspection findings are that at the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are close to the national average but in reading, they are better than the national average. Speaking and listening skills of pupils are satisfactory overall and as good as is expected by the National Curriculum for pupils by the end of both key stages. In 1999, National Curriculum assessment results indicated that by the age of 11 pupils' attainment was below the national average. However, taking the results of the last four years 1996-1999 together, the performance of pupils in English is well above the national average. The group of pupils who took the 1999 tests was highlighted as a year group which included a much higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs than usual. The school and local authority targets for this group of pupils were both exceeded, with test results being higher than teacher assessments. In 1999, the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests show that the pupils' attainment in reading and writing was well above the national average, with significantly more pupils attaining the above average Level 3 in reading and in writing than is found nationally. Girls performed at a slightly higher level than boys in reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
4. Inspection findings are that standards in mathematics are close to the national average by the end of both key stages. There is a strength in pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic numeracy and a comparative weakness in pupils' performance in mathematical investigations. The National Curriculum assessment results for 1999 showed that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance was very high in comparison with the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Between 1996 and 1999, the overall trend in results in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 was well above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in 1999 were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools.

These results contradicted the trends between 1997 and 1999 which showed results to be above the national average.

5. In science, pupils have a knowledge and understanding of the subject expected of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There is a comparative weakness in the skill of pupils to independently plan, perform and record practical investigations. In the National Curriculum end of key stage tests, pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 performed poorly in 1999 and results were well below the national average and the average achieved in similar schools. The current standard of teaching in science is satisfactory and successfully promotes satisfactory rates of progress in the development of scientific knowledge across the school for almost all pupils, including lower attaining and higher attaining pupils.
6. The school has set targets for the end of each key stage in mathematics and English in accordance with national and local guidance. The targets are realistic and the staff use satisfactory procedures for tracking pupils' progress towards them.
7. In other subjects, art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and achieve as well as they can. In music pupils make good progress and reach standards of performance which are better than normally found for pupils aged seven and 11.
8. The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effectively organised to identify pupils who need additional help in class. This ensures they make similar progress to that of their classmates. Arrangements for supporting pupils who have statements of special educational needs are effective and ensure they attain standards in line with their prior achievements. Pupils who are withdrawn from class to receive additional help with literacy gain competence in basic reading, writing and spelling skills.

Pupils attitudes, values and personal development

9. Most pupils have good attitudes to school life which ensure that they are happy and respond well to the activities they are given. Pupils behave well in and around school and in most lessons, but there are occasional lessons when teaching lacks enough challenge and expectation and as a result pupils become boisterous and mildly disruptive. When this happens, the progress made by pupils during those lessons is less than satisfactory.
10. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are very good and there is no evidence of any oppressive behaviour. As a result, pupils feel confident to listen to one another, respect others' opinions and feelings and learn tolerance and understanding. They often think about how well they have performed or treated others and then talk about how they could be better.
11. Pupils with special educational needs generally respond well to their lessons and demonstrate a positive attitude to learning alongside their classmates. A minority of pupils in Year 3 are less co-operative and interested in learning. Pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties respond well to the help the school provides in enabling them to come to terms with their difficulties and build meaningful relationships with adults and their classmates when they are included in assembly and at play times.

12. Pupils have good levels of punctuality and the school's attendance figures are above the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are low. There have been no exclusions of any pupils in the last twelve months.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Pupils benefit from satisfactory teaching with strengths in the teaching of mathematics, English and music. Of 44 lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better in 93% and unsatisfactory in 7 %. Almost 60% of lessons were good or very good. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved in Key Stage 1 from often having shortcomings to being entirely satisfactory. There are particular strengths in the teaching of the under-fives. In Key Stage 2, teaching remains satisfactory but there are some variations between classes which impact upon the progress pupils make. There are strengths in teaching in upper Key Stage 2 and pupils make good progress, but in lower Key Stage 2 the quality varies considerably. Teaching is good in mathematics and satisfactory in English but in science and physical education it varies from being good to unsatisfactory. The teaching of information technology is currently unsatisfactory which contributes to standards which are well below what is expected by the National Curriculum for pupils aged 7 and 11.
14. A strength of teaching throughout the school is the care and attention staff give to the emotional and personal development of pupils which makes sure that pupils feel secure and happy. Good class routines are established at an early age which help lessons to run smoothly and in most cases, efficiently. Pupils are well managed although at times, in unsatisfactory lessons, pupils are not challenged enough which results in pupils becoming restless and mildly disruptive. This was especially the case in some subjects in one class in lower Key Stage 2. Very good relationships exist between teachers, support staff and pupils which engender in pupils good attitudes to learning so that pupils make satisfactory progress across the school in each subject except information technology where progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets in their individual education plans. Higher attaining pupils are usually given work which challenges and extends their learning except in problem solving work in mathematics and science and in the use of the computer.
15. Teachers have a secure knowledge of how to teach reading and writing and basic mathematical skills and knowledge. Staff have worked very hard to introduce both the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. As a result standards in basic literacy skills such as spelling and use of grammar in English and skills of mental problem solving in mathematics are improving. Reading is taught well across the school which is the main reason why standards in this aspects of English are better than national average. Teachers have a secure knowledge of most subjects which contributes to the satisfactory standards reached by pupils. In science, a strength of teaching is the development of pupils' knowledge, and good teaching of music produces good standards in this subject. Confidence in teaching investigative skills in mathematics and science is weak, which is reflected by the comparatively low expectations for pupils to work independently in these subjects. This reduces the number of pupils capable of reaching the above average Level 5 by the end of Key Stage 2.

16. In Reception, lessons are well organised with a good range of appropriate activities but poor resources restrict some learning opportunities, for example, in creative and imaginative play and in outdoor activities. The needs of children under-five are catered for very well despite poor resources overall. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs is very well managed so that they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Support staff are very effective in supporting children in Reception and the school is doing all that it can to make sure that the support of outside agencies is used for those pupils who need it.
17. In Key Stages 1 and 2, although teachers know what their intentions are for lessons, the quality and format of planning is inconsistent across the school. With the exception of planning for literacy and numeracy, confusion exists about what constitutes long and medium term planning. Even though the needs of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are generally well catered for in lessons, their needs are not explicit in planning. What the school calls long-term planning relates to half term's plans which are normally called medium-term. The links between whole school plans and medium term planning are often unclear. In the event of prolonged staff absence or the appointment of new teachers, this inconsistency risks the progress that pupils make across the school and the lack of clarity makes effective assessment of pupils in information technology and other foundation subjects very difficult.
18. Assessment is used by teachers to provide work which matches pupils' levels of ability in English and mathematics. National Curriculum assessment results are carefully analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses of teaching so that improvements can be made where necessary. Pupils are very well prepared for the end of key stage National Curriculum assessment tests with standards being pushed up by the effective use of a combination of booster groups and regular revision lessons and practising of past papers. Homework is a feature of all pupils' education and teachers use it effectively to extend pupils' learning in the classroom and offer parents opportunities to help their child at home.
19. There is an inconsistency in the quality and use of marking between different classes. Its value in setting appropriate expectations for pupils is not always recognised or used. Where it is good, pupils are expected to correct work and know that these corrections will be checked. In other classes, however, pupils know that they do not need to respond to comments made about their work, and these pupils are used to producing lower standards of work than they are capable of.

HOW GOOD ARE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

21. The school successfully fulfils the aims of its mission statement by providing all pupils, including those who are under the age of five, with a secure, caring and Christian environment which aims to fully develop all aspects of each child's potential. Parents are fully supportive of the aims, values and attitudes offered by the school.
22. The range and quality of opportunities for learning provided by the school for all pupils is satisfactory. Each subject of the curriculum is taught but important elements of the information technology curriculum are not planned for or taught. All statutory requirements are met and all pupils are given equal access to the curriculum. Some improvements have been made since the last inspection in providing a broader curriculum in science, music and physical education. Curricular provision covering all

the areas of learning for children who are under five in the Reception class is good. The curriculum addresses their physical, intellectual, creative and social development and provides experiences that successfully lead the children to learning from the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

23. Following initial difficulties the school has now successfully implemented the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. A key issue was raised in the 1996 inspection report concerning curriculum matters. This stated that the school should “develop an overview of the curriculum by devising a whole school approach to teaching and learning which encompasses a whole school curriculum plan.” The school has made some progress in tackling this issue but the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the National Literacy Strategy has reduced the time available to make a full response. The headteacher and staff do not yet fully evaluate the relevance of their whole school planning and as a result teachers have not prepared schemes of work which reflect the specific needs of pupils in the school. With the exception of English, mathematics and science, curriculum planning is hampered by insufficient guidance to enable teachers to maximise pupils’ progress as they move through the school.
24. Pupils are capable of taking responsibility for learning but the opportunities for pupils to develop independent investigative skills in mathematics and science are often minimal which reduces the standards reached by pupils in these areas of mathematics and science. The school makes good provision for the teaching of personal and social education and elements of health education. The Life Education caravan visits the school annually and raises awareness of the dangers of drug abuse and there are projects to promote awareness of healthy living as part of science. The governing body has an agreed and published policy for sex education.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school provides a flexible range of support to meet the various needs of individual pupils. The most effective is in-class support from learning support assistants. Although teachers devise pupils’ individual education plans, they are not always used to effectively plan suitable work to meet the needs of all individuals. The school ensures that the provision outlined in pupils’ statements is in place and is reviewed annually in line with the Code of Practice guidance.
26. The curriculum is enriched by good extra curricular provision that includes musical and sporting activities as well as French and study support. Pupils are invited to participate in the activities and many pupils benefit from them. Governors and parents, along with the staff make valuable contributions to this aspect of educational provision. The curriculum is also appropriately supported by educational visits that include residential experiences for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
27. Links with the community are good especially within the Catholic community and close links with the local Catholic High School are effective in easing the transition of pupils to their secondary stage of education. The school has also forged good links with local schools and colleges.
28. Overall the provision made for pupils’ spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is good and is a strength of the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

29. The school makes good provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and satisfactory provision for developing pupils' cultural development. There is a particular strength in the promotion of good moral and social values. Good provision exists for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies and many lessons include appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider their place in the world. A particularly good feature is the "Quiet room" the school has created. A respectful approach to whole school and class prayer is encouraged through the creation of a focus, such as a Jubilee candle. The school makes good use of opportunities to develop pupils' feelings of awe and wonder. Opportunities are provided in literacy lessons for pupils to reflect on a wide range of poetry and stories with morals. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to have a clear understanding of right and wrong and to treat property and equipment with respect. Staff work alongside parents to guide pupils to be honest, fair and sensitive to the needs of others. Self-discipline is encouraged and good behaviour is rewarded. Consequently, behaviour is good in class, in the playground, and when moving around the school. Pupils are aware of the effect of their actions upon others. Moral issues are raised in assemblies, in lessons and through the personal and social education that is developed in classroom discussions. Relationships are very good throughout the school and teachers offer themselves as good role models.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school has established a real sense of community, in which teachers, staff and pupils co-operate well and show genuine interest in one another's actions and well being. It is encouraged further by the good working partnership created with the school, parents, the parish and the local community. Pupils interact well and are encouraged to develop initiative and to take responsible action in the routine day to day activities within school. Tasks are regularly allocated and several instances were seen where pupils were involved in helping. For example, they are encouraged to help in assemblies, take registers and look after Reception pupils in the playground. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The good quality of display allows pupils to celebrate their artistic and other achievements. For example, there are very colourful displays in school depicting the styles of Monet and Picasso. Although the art, music and geography of other cultures is sometimes used in lessons the provision for multi-cultural education is a weaker area of the school's work and this has not improved since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. There is an atmosphere of care which permeates the school and good measures are in place which eliminate bullying or aggressive behaviour and makes sure that pupils feel secure. The school promotes good behaviour and attendance through agreed, shared and successfully implemented policies. Teachers know pupils well and pupils are given good support if emotional or personal problems exist. Good procedures are in place for promoting pupils' personal development. When asked, pupils willingly take responsibility for helping others, for example, pupils in Year 6 support Reception children in reading and some pupils supervise others during wet playtimes. All aspects of first aid, health and safety and fire regulations are fulfilled. The governing body maintains a good overview of potential risks and hazards and makes sure pupils or adults are safe.
32. The school has devised links with other agencies to ensure the provision outlined in pupils' statements of special educational needs is implemented. The special

educational needs co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with a wide range of other professionals, parents, carers and other schools. These duties are undertaken regularly, as is the organisation of the annual review meetings. The school implements satisfactory assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and comply with the Code of Practice. However, the information is not yet used effectively or consistently for reviewing the appropriateness of pupils being retained on the school's special educational needs register or deciding what further help they may require.

33. The school meets its statutory requirements as outlined in all pupils' statements of special educational needs. All statements and reviews are up to date and specified provision is implemented effectively, including access to additional staffing.
34. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement are satisfactory. Children are assessed in the term that they begin school at the age of four. Recent improvements have been made with a careful analysis of information to identify pupils' needs. The current baseline assessment is a new system which has yet to inform the progress made by pupils later on in the school. Arrangements for assessing attainment and progress are satisfactory in English and mathematics but unsatisfactory in science and information technology. The outcomes of assessment are used to set and group pupils by ability in Literacy and numeracy which is helping teachers to match work to pupils' needs. In foundation subjects, teachers rely upon what they know about individuals and there are no formalised assessment or record keeping systems. There is little evidence that this knowledge is used to match work to pupils' needs in science, information technology and foundation subjects.
35. It was reported in the previous inspection that there was not enough use made of assessment data and information to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and planning and to identify improvements where required, and this remains a weakness. There have been improvements in the provision for personal and social education in that the school now includes programmes for the misuse of drugs and health education. These are appropriately linked to relationships and family values.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents are highly satisfied with most aspects of school life. The school encourages parents to be involved in their children's life in school through regular meetings with staff, occasional curriculum evenings, the provision of curriculum plans for parents and clear strategies to encourage parents to support their children at home through homework. Every two years the views of parents and pupils are sought and the findings from a questionnaire are processed and considered when making targets for school development planning. This is a good process which makes parents feel involved and valued. Parents are kept informed about the progress their children make when they receive good quality annual reports which praise strengths whilst picking out pertinent weaknesses so that support can be given at home where necessary. The quality of annual reports has improved since the previous inspection. The home-school agreement is good because in addition to setting out the contributions that both parents and children can make to their children's education it includes the school's policy for behaviour.
36. Good induction procedures prepare parents well for supporting their child when they begin school in Reception. The school provides the venue for a pre-school toy library and this prepares children well for beginning school.

37. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are appropriately involved in annual review meetings. They are invited to contribute both in writing and verbally to the discussions about the continuing needs of their child and the progress they have made since the previous review. However, the school is less efficient in consulting with parents of pupils who have individual education plans, where the tendency is to inform parents rather than involve them in identifying their needs and contributing to setting targets and working to achieve these both at school and home. The school is aware of this and has plans to make this aspect of its work more effective. The needs of pupils with disabilities are appropriately met through regular contact between school and home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has the confidence of both the parents and staff and has successfully ensured that pupils are taught within a caring, Christian ethos. An instability in the school's senior management over the last three years has adversely affected the pace of change and procedures for monitoring the quality of education and standards of teaching. Throughout this time, the headteacher has maintained a good team spirit amongst staff so that the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced. Since the last inspection, the standards in the school have been maintained and the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is now better, but there has only been a partial improvement in some weaknesses that were key issues identified in the last inspection. The headteacher has recognised the need to strengthen the management of the school and has very recently strengthened the Senior Management Team. It consists of enthusiastic staff who are beginning to accelerate the pace of change and give the school a clearer educational direction. It works effectively with the headteacher to tackle important issues such as developing the curriculum, improving procedures for tracking the progress of pupils, monitoring the quality of teaching and making better use of the school development plan to raise standards.
39. The governing body is a strong, guiding group of committed people which ensures that all of its statutory duties are fulfilled. Through careful delegation of duties within the body, governors are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and take responsibility for improving both the quality and standards of education. A satisfactory school development planning system guides all aspects of the school's development although the criteria for checking the success of achieving its priorities are not yet explicit enough. The governing body has a competent and conscientious finance committee which carefully manages the school budget so that it remains balanced and makes sure that targets in the school development plan are linked to spending. Although the governing body has established ways of ensuring that the costs of major developments such as extending the building are kept to the minimum, procedures for considering the impact of spending upon standards in the classroom are not yet fully developed. One example of this is the adverse impact of the decision to support the above recommended levels on staffing whilst not fully appreciating that a consequent shortfall in essential resources is impacting upon the quality of education provided. There are major shortages in the provision of suitable resources for under-fives, and for information technology. There are also shortages in resources for science, mathematics and a limited range of books in the library.

40. There is a commitment to improving standards. The staff and governing body are beginning to monitor pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching but many procedures are informal and do not track the progress made by pupils rigorously enough or identify the needs of individual teachers. The use of assessment data to check the progress of the school towards the school's targets is in the early stages of development and it is beginning to influence decisions so that there is an improved focus upon raising attainment. The use of procedures for, and use of assessment is, however, a weakness of the school. The outcomes of assessment are not yet used enough to improve planning and teaching.
41. Staff who have received specialist training are particularly effective in the contribution they make to teaching and learning, especially when they are deployed to support pupils in whole class lessons. Staff without special training are less effective and frequently their expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. The additional support provided for pupils with statements of special educational needs is most effective when used to enable pupils to be taught alongside their classmates. The special educational needs co-ordinator is an experienced teacher who has recently been appointed to this role. She has been diligent in quickly informing herself of her duties. She is extremely well supported by the special educational needs governor who has an excellent view of how to further develop this aspect of the work of the school.
42. The school offers good support to students in Initial Teacher Training from St. Martins College, Lancaster who benefit from the presence on the school staff of three trained associate tutors. Although mentors are appointed for supporting newly qualified teachers, the procedures for monitoring and guiding such staff are not formalised resulting in times when staff are not systematically given the guidance they need. Pupils benefit from satisfactory accommodation although some classes are very cramped which restricts some aspects of their education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE IN FUTURE?

43. In order to improve the quality of education the school offers to its pupils, and to build upon the satisfactory improvements made since the last inspection, the headteacher and staff together with the governing body should:

1) raise standards in information technology by:

- ensuring that that a policy and scheme of work is implemented in each class;
- developing a way of assessing and recording pupils' achievements so that individual strengths and weaknesses can be accurately identified so that help and guidance can be accurately targeted;
- training staff to use the computers to support learning across the curriculum
(paragraphs 2, 13, 14, 22, 34, 39, 59, 63, 68, 71, 90-92))

2) improve the procedures for checking on the progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science across the school by:

- improving the way in which assessment information is used to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum so that ways of improving what is taught and how it is taught are devised.
(paragraphs 60, 66,70)

3) improve the range and quality of resources for learning

(paragraphs 1, 16, 39, 51, 59, 70, 78, 85, 89, 96))

4) challenge pupils' ability to apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics and science to investigations by:

- devising and implementing a strategy for improving opportunities for pupils to perform problem solving investigations
(paragraphs 4, 5, 61, 68, 69)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan

- introduce a coherent and consistent approach to short-term lesson planning (paragraph 17)
- improve the curriculum by ensuring that schemes of work for subjects are less general and more accurately reflect the needs of pupils in the school (paragraph 23)
- make better use of marking across the school so that it gives better guidance to pupils. (paragraph 19)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	86

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	9	50	34	7		

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)		200
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	17	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	15	17	17
	Total	29	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (89)	97(89)	97(93)
	National	82 (74)	82 (81)	87 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	15	17	17
	Total	29	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	97 (89)	100 (86)
	National	82 (80)	86 (83)	87 (86)

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
	1999	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	21	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68(77)	65(79)	68(82)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	12	10
	Girls	8	12	13
	Total	16	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55(77)	77(82)	77(85)
	National	68 (65)	69 (66)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	202
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	
Total number of education support staff	
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	299,549
Total expenditure	314,363
Expenditure per pupil	1556
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,624
Balance carried forward to next year	9,810

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

202

Number of questionnaires returned

97

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	44	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	44	5	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	41	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	59	14	3	1
The teaching is good.	57	34	3	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	45	16	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	25	6	5	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	45	7	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	65	26	4	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	44	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	55	14	3	6

Other issues raised by parents

At the pre-inspection meeting parents expressed high levels of satisfaction and support for the school but there was some uneasiness about the amount of homework given to pupils in upper Key Stage 2. Analysis of the questionnaires showed that a third of responses from upper Key Stage 2 disagreed with the amount of work their children bring home.

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

44. At the time of inspection 11 children were under the age of five. These children are taught as part of the Reception class with extra support given for their specific needs. There is a high proportion of children in the current Reception class who have special educational needs and they make good progress and attain appropriate levels. Overall attainment on entry is broadly average although some children enter full-time education with poorly developed social and linguistic skills. By the age of five most children attain standards which are in line with those expected for their age in language and literacy, in mathematics, creative, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world around them and in physical development.
45. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher has a good understanding of the developmental needs of the age group. Planning is good and is based around the national desirable learning outcomes and the tasks are well matched to the children's needs. The teacher and classroom assistants work well together to ensure that pupils make good progress in all six areas of learning. All staff are friendly, approachable, and committed to the children in their care. The children's progress and attainment is monitored and the assessment procedures are satisfactory. Children with special educational needs are identified and supported at a very early stage. The teacher and classroom assistants make good use of questions to encourage the children to think for themselves and there is a purposeful atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher's enthusiastic approach and the high level and quality of adult support children receive are important factors in the good progress that is made.
46. Good provision is made to nurture children's **personal and social development** and children make good progress and attain the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. Children are actively encouraged to relate positively to others and soon learn what is expected of them. They learn in discussion times, for example, when passing a fluffy toy around that it is their turn to speak. In lessons the children often work in small groups, which effectively promotes collaboration and co-operation and most of them are courteous, polite and well behaved. Relationships are very good between the children themselves and between the children and all staff.
47. In **language and literacy** lessons, pupils listen eagerly to nursery rhymes and stories. Most children can recognise their own name and many of the cards with high frequency words. They enjoy looking at books in the reading corner and are developing good early reading and writing skills. Almost all the children copy their own names legibly and form letters correctly. They enjoy books and most children can read simple words and sentences. They re-tell stories they hear such as "The Hungry Caterpillar" and discuss events and characters. They are encouraged to talk about themselves and the activities they are involved with and develop a good vocabulary in their role-play in the "Health Centre." corner. The good quality teaching enables the children to make good progress and attain the nationally expected standards by the age of five.
48. Wide ranging activities and opportunities are provided to develop the children's **mathematical understanding**, including counting activities, pattern and shape recognition. The quality of teaching is good and the children attain the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. The children sing rhymes and use finger play in

counting songs. They learn to form numbers to record their counting activities and recognise numbers when using dice in matching activities. They have a good knowledge of shapes and can understand halves and repeating patterns. They make good progress in sorting and ordering and counting. Most can place objects in order using ordinal numbers such as fourth and fifth. They use a counting computer programme where they answer simple sums in a target time. The children use specific mathematical vocabulary such as “more than” and make good progress in developing numeracy skills.

49. The children develop a satisfactory **knowledge and understanding of the world** around them by the age of five. They often go on visits in the immediate vicinity such as to the local police and fire stations. These visits are followed by appropriate opportunities to ask questions and to talk, draw, paint or model what they see or find using a range of materials. The children use the computer’s mouse and some of its keys and can use programmes such as “Tizzy’s Toy Box ” with a good degree of competence. Good use is made of information technology and children confidently use the mouse as part of reading, spelling and number activities. The quality of teaching is good and the children make good progress in this area of learning. Their knowledge is enhanced by discussions about the class fish and bulbs, weather observations and in cookery sessions when they make cakes or gingerbread men.
50. Good quality teaching ensures that the children attain the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five in their **physical development**. Some activities, however, are hampered by the lack of suitable equipment. Children develop control and co-ordination of their bodies through the use of indoor apparatus and in movement lessons, and they make satisfactory progress in these lessons. Good use is made of the available accommodation but the activities are limited by the lack of a safe enclosed outdoor area where they can use large play equipment. Children develop finer manipulative skills through careful handling of small objects such as jigsaw pieces, in constructional play, when painting or when baking in food technology lessons. They use pencils, crayons and scissors and learn how to hold these implements and tools correctly.
51. The good quality teaching enables the children to make good progress in their **creative development**. Most children have attained the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. They demonstrate good creative and observational skills when drawing and painting spring flowers. They can use paints to create bold illustrations for stories they have enjoyed. They learn the words and melodies of simple songs, which they sing in tune. They enjoy imitating the teacher’s clapping rhythms and using body percussion in a class music lesson. Children are effectively developing the use of their imagination by creating actions that suit the mood of their role- play or the words of their songs. They carry out a wide range of practical activities with increasing confidence and obvious enjoyment and make a variety of objects with media such as play dough, but creative activities are hampered by the shortage of quality resources.

English

52. By the end of Key Stage 1, and 2, inspection evidence is that standards in English are close to the national average with a strength in pupils’ reading.
53. Throughout the school pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress in their English lessons. The strengths of the subject are reading and listening and

pupils make particularly good progress in these aspects of the subject. Whilst the overall progress that pupils make is satisfactory, the pupils' good reading standards are not always reflected in their writing, and this is particularly evident when scrutinising the written work the pupils have produced. Standards attained indicate that progress over time is patchy although it is particularly good in Year 6 due to the good quality teaching. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy was hampered by staffing problems and the school's slow response to change and it is only just beginning to have a positive impact upon standards. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

54. Attainment in speaking is average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Some pupils come to school with poorly developed speaking skills and teachers are particularly good at encouraging correct pronunciation and speech patterns. At both key stages pupils make progress that is at least satisfactory in this aspect of English. By the age of seven, pupils communicate with one another clearly and most give their views and opinions during class discussions. They extend their vocabulary when participating in literacy hour sessions. They discuss characters from stories in the "Big Books" and re-tell and sequence stories that they hear such as fairy stories, myths and legends with a good degree of accuracy. By the age of 11, most pupils are confident and articulate speakers, although a minority of pupils are rather quiet and prefer listening to speaking. However, most older pupils adapt their talk to different situations and express their opinions clearly, and by the age of 11 describe differences between fact and fiction when evaluating texts. The majority of pupils develop good vocabulary and master technical language across the curriculum.
55. Throughout the school, pupils show a good understanding of what is said and can respond appropriately to what they have heard. In Key Stage 1, they have many opportunities to listen to stories and to evaluate written work and the opinions of their peers. For example, Year 2 pupils listen carefully when the teacher explains the difference between a letter and a story and reads from the book "Handa's Surprise." Pupils contribute to debates, for example, in Year 6 they discuss the importance of formal language in documents such as solicitors' letters and their response shows that they listen with understanding and interest. Nearly all pupils are attentive listeners who enjoy class discussions and the final sessions of the literacy hour when they share their work with other members of the class. Skilful questioning by staff elicits thoughtful answers and pupils are responsive to the ideas and views of others. In discussion most pupils listen carefully and pay close attention to what others say and they make good progress in developing their listening skills. There was only limited evidence of pupils participating in drama and it was rarely mentioned by pupils or noted in teachers' planning.
56. Overall reading standards are above average at the end of both key stages and this is a strength of the school. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 read with good understanding of the text. Teachers and classroom assistants hear pupils read frequently and this is reinforced by some parents. By the age of 11, pupils identify story themes, plots and characters and comprehension skills are good. All pupils participate in reading activities during the daily literacy hour and show a real enjoyment of books. Pupils have good phonic skills that they put to good use. At Key Stage 2 most pupils can make inferences and predictions from a variety of texts and identify and explain the use of parts of speech. Most pupils read fluently and accurately in group and class reading sessions and can use the text to extract evidence, for example, Year 5 pupils compare and contrast texts about "Mummification." The school places much emphasis

on reading and pupils at both key stages make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress towards the reading targets set in their individual education plans.

57. Scrutiny of work shows that throughout the school standards of writing are satisfactory but do not sufficiently reflect the good standards of reading that most pupils attain. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are independent writers and write using capital letters and full stops. Pupils recognise word patterns and understand technical vocabulary such as verbs, editing and lower case writing.. They sequence events, for example, when writing about the stages used when baking biscuits. Written work is usually short answers on worksheets or short news accounts and stories. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils produce written work that is of a satisfactory standard and most of it is interesting and varied in content. Pupils produce writing in a variety of genres such as stories, prayers, riddles, letters and information leaflets and a range of poetry that includes haiku, kennings and odes. Some examples of planning, drafting and re-drafting of work are evident but there is a shortage of examples of extended writing. The school has recognised this weakness and has modified its policy in order to improve standards, but this initiative is too recent to have yet impacted upon standards. Work is often crossed out and unfinished and this limits the scope and range of the written response. Despite their capabilities, some pupils take a long time to produce small quantities of writing. Overall standards of handwriting are average, but the presentation of some of the pupils' work is untidy. The content of written work is lively and thoughtful and standards of grammar, punctuation and the use of conventional English are satisfactory. Throughout the school standards of spelling are average with the school now having a structured programme in place. Overall, pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in writing, but this progress could be more rapid and does not always reflect the pupils' good standards of reading.
58. Most pupils have a positive attitude to their work and generally maintain good levels of concentration and perseverance. Throughout the school, pupils are well behaved and co-operative. They are helpful to one another and collaborate well in their groups. Pupils show enjoyment of reading activities and a keen interest in literature. However, pupils' levels of initiative and independence are not well developed and few pupils can speedily retrieve information for themselves from reference books or by using information and communication technology skills. The exception is in Year 6 where expectations are high and pupils' initiative and research skills are well developed.
59. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it is usually good. Literacy lessons are well structured and carefully prepared and all teachers give their pupils good support and encouragement. The group activities are usually well controlled and teachers manage their pupils well. All teachers plan using the National Literacy Strategy but there are inconsistencies in its implementation between classes and the pace of some of the lessons is slow particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4. When teachers' expectations are high, such as in Year 6, the pupils respond well to the challenges. Throughout the school good features are that teachers pay good attention to extending pupils' understanding of the structure and conventions of English and work very hard to reinforce and extend vocabulary. Satisfactory use is made of the new materials such as the "Big Books" and the group reading materials, but overall the level of resources is unsatisfactory and teachers often have to share them. Teachers have an appropriate focus on the literacy objectives and make satisfactory use of the whole class time and group sessions. They give good support in lessons but there is some overuse of worksheets and this limits pupils, written response. Occasionally, some of the written tasks that are set for the groups working

independently are not challenging enough, for example, pupils would benefit from being set time limits for the completion of work.

60. The school collects samples of pupils' work and teachers use satisfactory on-going assessment procedures to monitor individual progress but this data is not always used to help teachers with their planning. The marking of work is adequate but does not help pupils to identify areas where they can improve their work and does not focus on the way pupils present their work. The use of information technology equipment to support the subject is unsatisfactory throughout the school and pupils are not challenged to use their information and communication technology skills in a wider range of applications. The school library is inadequately stocked with quality reference and fiction books and this has a negative effect upon the quality of learning. The subject co-ordinators provide effective leadership but although National Curriculum assessment results are carefully analysed, procedures for regularly assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of teaching are weak.

Mathematics

61. Based upon inspection evidence pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are achieving the standards expected for their age. There is a strength in pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic numeracy and a comparative weakness in pupils' performance in mathematical investigations.
62. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. New learning builds systematically upon prior knowledge and understanding of the subject and pupils develop skills in applying mathematical concepts to their everyday lives. Good standards over time have been brought about by the amount of good and very good teaching and the significant improvement of the overall quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. Expectations of what pupils are to attain have risen as a result of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and this is reflected in the setting of challenging targets for pupils to attain. The use of 'booster' classes to give pupils extra tuition prior to the national tests also helps them to attain higher standards.
63. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils count, add and subtract numbers to twenty accurately, are beginning to understand the place value of each digit in a number and have sound mental calculation skills for their age. They name and know the properties of two dimensional shapes. Pupils understand which are symmetrical patterns and where to place the line of symmetry. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils understand the value of a digit in numbers to one thousand. Pupils know the properties of numbers such as multiples, factors and what a prime number is. They multiply and divide four digits by two digits. They have a good understanding of percentages and area. Pupils construct and measure angles accurately. Teachers use mathematics satisfactorily to develop pupils' literacy skills; and pupils use a range of mathematical language correctly. Numeracy is used satisfactorily across the curriculum. However, the use of information technology in mathematics to support pupils' learning is unsatisfactory.
64. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall although there is a weakness in the teaching of independent investigative skills. At Key Stage 1, satisfactory teaching promotes amongst pupils' attitudes to learning which are at least good and sometimes very good. Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of ordinal numbers and time through skilled questioning by the teacher, framed to appropriately challenge individual pupils. Questions and written work are prepared by using a secure

knowledge of pupils' previous learning, which ensures all work is matched to pupils' varying needs. There is also some link within the pupils' learning to data handling. As well as learning the hours and half hours pupils relate this knowledge to events which take place at specific times. Year 2 pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment. The practice of supporting lower attaining pupils in a small group setting positively affects their progress. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in Year 2. They listen carefully and respond appropriately; this helps significantly to develop their knowledge and understanding. They are expected to work hard and respond accordingly. They complete a lot of work in a lesson. Over time this increases the rate at which they make progress. In lessons where pupils' progress is less significant, teachers' knowledge of pupils' prior attainment is not used effectively to match work to the varying needs of the pupils. Standards and the amount of work expected from pupils by teachers are not high enough. Within these lessons pupils work slowly.

65. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall, although it varies between very good and satisfactory. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment well. Work is matched accurately to pupils' different levels of attainment. This positively affects progress. In a lesson in Year 4 on multiplication higher attainers were suitably challenged and attained levels above those expected for pupils of this age. High expectations of behaviour and how much work teachers expect pupils to do positively affect learning. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils showed a good developing knowledge and understanding of triangular numbers, patterns and sequences and attained above what is expected for pupils of this age. The pace of these lessons is brisk and this ensures pupils complete a lot of work. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics at Key Stage 2 are at least good and frequently very good. They are well behaved and work hard. They are keen learners.
66. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved significantly at Key Stage 1. Throughout the school teachers' planning is better and the National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented. Teachers' planning allows pupils to build on knowledge and understanding gained earlier. The planning is designed to ensure that all pupils receive a similar experience, but one that meets their needs. The quality of the assessment of pupils' work has improved. In most cases it is used effectively to plan work to meet the varying needs of pupils. The subject co-ordinators provide effective leadership but although National Curriculum assessment results are carefully analysed, procedures for regularly assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of teaching are weak. The principal co-ordinator provides good quality ideas and knowledge to other teachers in the school.

Science

67. Standards in science have been maintained since the last inspection and are close to the national average by the end of both key stages. Pupils have a secure knowledge of science appropriate to their age, but skills of independent learning are not as good as they could be, especially by the end of Key Stage 1.
68. In Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing ideas about science and reach standards which are close to the national average. During lessons pupils work well and take an interest in the work provided. Although some practical skills are developed which involve pupils sharing and working together, the progress made in performing investigations is

slow and unsatisfactory overall. In Key Stage 1, satisfactory teaching ensures pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about plants, animals, the properties of materials, light, sound, electricity and movement. In Year 1, good teaching successfully inspires pupils and captures their imaginations so that they develop a secure understanding of the changes that occur when cress seeds grow. Skilful questioning helps pupils to understand the growth of shoots and roots, as well as confirming pupils' knowledge that seeds need water, light and warmth. In Year 2, teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to work within a group to classify a range of resources by the way in which they make sounds. Teachers' satisfactory subject knowledge ensures that pupils are asked questions which challenge their ideas and make them think. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is very much geared to developing knowledge of science, and practical activities are designed to illustrate ideas. Very little opportunity is given for pupils to learn ways of doing simple investigations with a degree of independence. Very little use is made of information technology to support science.

69. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall although, at times, an insecure knowledge of how to teach investigative skills results in pupils not making progress in this area of science at a fast enough rate. During two lessons, whilst they were planned well and resources were effectively organised, pupils were over-directed so that they were not able to present their own ideas or plan and carry out their own investigations. Whilst it is quite acceptable at times for pupils to learn to follow instructions, there is too much emphasis upon this approach and not enough thought given to developing pupils' independence. A strength in teaching is the effective use of scientific vocabulary. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop a secure knowledge of key scientific words and their meaning. During a lesson during which pupils looked at the effect of vinegar upon an egg, pupils accurately used the term acid and described the way in which a chemical reaction occurs when vinegar touches the egg. In Year 6, pupils are challenged well through guided activities. As part of a topic looking at materials and their properties, pupils were successfully challenged to find out which factors influence the rate at which a range of everyday household products dissolve. In so doing, pupils demonstrated a sound understanding of making a prediction and then carrying out a fair test to find out if their prediction was accurate or not. The skills of measuring accurately, using measuring cylinders or thermometers or scales, are not as good as they could be. Good use of a record sheet by the teacher, made sure that pupils followed a systematic way of recording their plans and the results of their tests.
70. The subject is managed by a team of co-ordinators who have correctly identified ways of improving standards in science. Plans exist to improve the current policy which is outdated, and the curriculum 2000 is to be referred to, to adjust the scheme of work where possible. The quality of short term planning varies in quality and format. This makes the job of the co-ordinator to monitor science across the school more difficult. Although National Curriculum assessment results are carefully analysed, procedures for regularly assessing and recording pupils attainment and progress are weak. Not enough regular assessment of science occurs, by keeping and using in each class records to pick out how well pupils are doing and to improve the curriculum where necessary. Resources for science are weak and restrict the way in which science is taught and planned.
71. With the exception of some classes, for example, Year 6, not enough use is made of information technology to support learning in science. Pupils learn to apply literacy skills by writing in a reporting style and occasions occur when mathematical skills,

such as measuring and recording data are consolidated and practised. The school does not, however, explicitly plan for such curriculum links and they happen by chance.

Art

72. Since the time of the last inspection standards in art have remained broadly satisfactory. Pupils' work in art, including those with special educational needs, is generally of a standard expected for their age. Pupils make steady progress in their art lessons, which results in progress over time being satisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their classmates.
73. Through cross-curricular links with other subjects pupils are provided with opportunities to observe objects and record their observations using pencil crayons, felt pens, chalk and charcoal. However, in some classes, the range of work is too narrow and frequently does not promote adequate development of skills associated with the subject, especially at Key Stage 2.
74. Pupils in Key Stage 1 explore the medium of paint by mixing colours, examining texture and paint application using a variety of tools including brushes. They use pencils for shading and develop these skills through looking at patterns in everyday objects and abstract patterns by modern artists. Older pupils in the key stage explore the techniques involved in observational drawings. They attempt to replicate the size, shape and texture of materials used to make traditional musical instruments. Work is frequently linked to literacy and numeracy. Pupils have made their own alphabet frieze by painting pictures such as a turtle for the letter 'T' and using symmetrical patterns to make butterflies.
75. In Key Stage 2 pupils further investigate observational drawing techniques by observing facial features and drawing a friend. They discuss how a face is proportioned and attempt to replicate this in their own work. Older pupils in the key stage link their work in art to their study of the Aztecs. They use similar style to make masks from papier-mâché and clay, then decorate them using repeating Aztec designs. Other pupils explore perspective and the construction of foreground, middle-ground and background in their two dimensional work based on the style of L S Lowry. Over time all pupils study the work of well known artists and their styles. Pupils in Year 3 are familiar with Seurat and Pointillism and Year 6 know that Picasso is renowned for his 'cubist' style.
76. Pupils talk positively about their art lessons. However, many younger pupils are reticent to discuss their work and lack confidence and understanding about suggesting ways in which they could improve it. They are not familiar with discussing different techniques, but frequently refer to art as painting. Evidence was found to suggest all pupils gained experience from working in plaster, papier-mâché, mod-roc or clay. In the lessons observed pupils enjoyed the practical activities, concentrated on what they were being taught and took care of their own and others' work. They talked enthusiastically with one another whilst working and showed a pride in having their work praised and admired.
77. Over time, several teachers have placed too little emphasis upon teaching skills, knowledge and understanding of artistic techniques and too much upon using art as

an activity related to other subjects. It is acknowledged that the building places restrictions upon the amount of space available, but work on display is not adequately annotated or clearly attributable to individuals within classes.

78. Currently there is no formal monitoring of classroom practice. There is no portfolio of moderated work to inform teachers about standards or to assist them in planning for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The use of assessment does not adequately inform curriculum planning to ensure continuity and progression, or breadth and balance of experience. Opportunities for art to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is not explicit and does not give teachers guidance about how to implement this aspect of the curriculum. As a result it is frequently disregarded. Whilst resources for the subject are just adequate for the current level of art work undertaken in the school they are too limited to provide a wider range of experiences.

Design and technology

79. Since the time of the last inspection the school has maintained similar standards. Pupils' work in design and technology is of a standard expected for pupils of their age. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
80. Few lessons were taught during the period of the inspection. Therefore judgements take into account discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of documentation provided by the school and the evaluation of a range of other evidence including the limited selection of pupils' work displayed in the school.
81. The youngest pupils can design and make simple Mother's Day cards using a variety of card and decorative paper. They create their own background by making 'bubble print' paper and choosing their favourite primary coloured paint. Pupils develop their skills in joining materials using glue, split pins, elastic bands and staples. By working with a range of textiles, including binca, they improve their skills in basic sewing and can use threads to make running stitch which they securely fasten off. Pupils are particularly well motivated by opportunities to participate in food technology lessons and demonstrated great pleasure in sharing their gingerbread men, talking with confidence about the stages of making and baking.
82. In Key Stage 2 pupils use books to sketch/draft their planned models of structures which contain circuits, such as a lighthouse. They link their learning from history by designing their own Roman shields and further develop their food technology skills by making milk shakes. Other pupils evaluate the process and outcome of baking cakes using a range of different ingredients. They refine their skills of design through links with work in literacy; designing a book cover; science; combining healthy eating with making cakes and milk shakes and creating their own Christmas sock design.
83. Pupils enjoy their lessons and make satisfactory progress. They talk enthusiastically about what they have learned and how they could have done better. However, too few opportunities are planned for pupils to undertake this evaluation on a regular basis. Very little written work relating to planning and assessment of their own efforts has been undertaken by the pupils. This results in a valuable learning opportunity being missed.

84. Whilst teachers plan their lessons adequately, there is a lack of clarity about whether the skills, knowledge and understanding are design and technology based or art based. At present inadequate guidance is available for teachers to direct them in being secure about their lesson intentions. Systems for assessing pupils' work are unsatisfactory, therefore teachers do not have adequate information about what their class knows, understands and is able to achieve. No time is made available for staff to monitor classroom practice to ensure pupils are making progress in their learning and teachers are knowledgeable about what it is they are teaching.
85. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory and teachers who are less secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject make inadequate use of what is available. The accommodation in school places some restrictions on the range of activities teachers are able to undertake. There are facilities which are available for food technology but not for the construction of large objects or extensive use of control technology.

Geography and History

86. Evidence from lessons, displays and pupils' work shows that attainment in history and geography is in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of both key stages. The school links planning for these subjects and in most classes they are taught in blocks of time within each term or half term. In Year 6 many of the topics are effectively combined. During the inspection these pupils were collecting information about modern Mexico following on from their previous work on the ancient Aztec civilisation. By the age of 11, pupils are developing their research skills well and are given good opportunities to seek information effectively from the library, from CD Rom and from other sources. The questions they had been given were both challenging and interesting and because of this, the pupils were both increasing their knowledge and becoming stimulated to find out more for themselves.
87. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are developing an understanding of time through their study of changes in the way people live comparing the work of farmers now and during the early part of the 20th century. This links closely with a topic on foods which come from the farm. Pupils have been looking at the differences between living in Morecambe and living on the Isle of Struay. Pupils' work shows a good level of understanding. Their work contains a suitable amount of information and the classroom has appropriate maps and pictures which the pupils can identify and use. Younger pupils in the key stage are also developing map skills and are increasing their knowledge of the area immediately surrounding the school. They have been for a walk around the neighbourhood and are engaged in identifying features on a well-prepared large scale sketch-map of the area. This work is reflected in history lessons further up the school where pupils in Year 4 are developing a clear understanding of Morecambe in times past when the area surrounding the school was known as Poulton.
88. Pupils have been studying old photographs and newspaper articles developing their skills, understanding and knowledge. Earlier in the year the oldest pupils in the school spent some time looking at the Tudor period with some sensitive work, drawing on pupils own interpretations of family life and drawing comparisons between Tudor marriage celebrations and those of the present day. Regularly there are good links with other subjects for example with English when pupils were studying entertainment in Shakespearean times. Pupils respond well to the challenges they are given and

make satisfactory progress. The standard of presentation of their work is, however, variable. The more formal work is neat and shows pupils' pride in what they have done. However, some other work, much of which is the result of pupils' investigations, is often untidy and the quality of the presentation is poor.

89. Lessons are appropriately planned with sufficient interest and stimulation. Teachers are enthusiastic and well informed. There is a good emphasis on the development of pupils' research skills. Lessons move at a good pace and, particularly in Key Stage 2, fact sheets which are prepared by the teachers are full of basic information and are clearly matched to pupils' abilities and their previous attainment. However, the breadth of the curriculum is constrained by the amount of time which is allocated to these subjects over the year. As a result although pupils make good progress in developing subject skills, their acquisition of knowledge is more restricted. A good start has been made on subject co-ordination to ensure coverage and breadth but this has not yet had enough impact. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment have been maintained at Key Stage 2 and improved at Key Stage 1 where many pupils were then said to be underachieving. However the quality and range of resources has not been improved and is now barely adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Those resources which are available are used well and teachers make good use of a wide range of visits and fieldwork to support pupils learning effectively.

Information technology

90. Very little use is made of information technology across the school. As a result, pupils' progress in information technology is unsatisfactory and standards are below what is expected nationally by the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection.
91. Teacher's knowledge varies and is unsatisfactory overall. The scope and possibilities for using the computer to help learning across the curriculum are not fully understood. There is good practice, however in Reception and satisfactory practice in Year 3 and Year 6. In Reception, children are given a good introduction to the computer. The teacher is confident and knowledgeable and uses this asset to develop amongst the children the ability to use a mouse to select icons so that they can use the computer to learn to counts and begin to read and spell. In Year 3, some use is made of the computer to encourage pupils to learn and apply their times table knowledge. Pupils also use basic word processing skills to create and edit writing. Skills are developed whereby pupils learn to control a programmable toy. The internet is used by the teacher to provide pupils with a weekly mathematics puzzle which is a good example of using information technology to motivate pupils and support learning across the curriculum. In Year 6, pupils use the computer to write, edit and save writing on screen, and occasionally gather data and create graphs and tables to represent it and make it more accessible. Pupils know how to select different fonts and ways of editing text, but skills such as combining writing and pictures are weak. Pupils in Year 6 use CD Rom material well to research into a topic about Earth and Space.
92. The school recognises the problems that exist in information technology and has established an action plan which incorporates funds from the National Grid for Learning. Resources, which have been improved recently, are to be upgraded further and appropriate training provided for staff. The co-ordinators for information technology are fully aware of what needs to be done to raise standards. They plan to implement a detailed scheme of work so that teachers can make sure that pupils all

improve and extend their skills as they move through the school. An effective assessment and record keeping system is to be developed so that pupils' progress can be accurately monitored.

Music

93. Music is a strength of the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are working at higher levels than expected for their ages. This represents an improvement from the findings of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils sing in a tuneful manner with good attention paid to rhythm and pitch.
94. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils gain experience of the main elements of the music curriculum, and take part in a range of composing and performing activities. They use body percussion to tap out rhythms and they show good awareness of beat and pulse. In Year 2 they play instruments confidently and rhythmically and can compare and contrast two pieces of taped music using good musical vocabulary. Pupils listen attentively to pieces of music and have good appraisal skills. They understand changes in tempo and dynamics and can name several famous composers. They know a wide range of hymns and songs, which they perform enthusiastically, often with accompanying actions to reinforce the lyrics.
95. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to extend their knowledge and understanding of music, and many benefit from taking part in extra-curricular activities provided by the school which include a choir, recorder groups and the opportunity to play brass or string instruments. Pupils understand how to use repeated rhythmic patterns effectively both as an accompaniment and as a composing device and can follow various styles of notation. In Year 6 they listen to Ugandan music and confidently identify beat and rhythm. In a Key Stage 2 hymn practice pupils sing "Laudete Dominum" in two parts in an admirable manner with sensitive harmony and accurate pitch. Pupils show good understanding of musical terms such as unison and melody and show real enjoyment when participating in musical activities.
96. The quality of music teaching throughout the school is good. The school has several members of staff who not only play musical instruments but have a high level of subject knowledge and expertise. This has a positive effect upon the progress that pupils make and the standards attained. Lessons are well planned and a very good lesson was observed in Year 6 where the planned activities were interesting and challenging and the pace of the lesson was brisk. Teachers' planning is well supported by a commercial scheme although other resources are in short supply and this can limit participation and performance.

Physical Education

97. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in physical education are as good as one expects for pupils of their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils performance in gymnastics is good. Pupils have a good sense of balance and co-ordination. They respond well to the enthusiasm and leadership of the teacher and pupils are well behaved and enjoy gymnastics. Pupils are able to work together co-operatively. They take turns and work well in small groups. Pupils move with a good sense of their own safety over apparatus and create sequences of movements.

98. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress varies according to the physical education focus and the quality of teaching. During a lesson during which indoor hockey was practised, the majority of pupils demonstrated good levels of co-ordination and control. This was particularly evident during skill based tasks whereby pupils dribbled the ball well and showed good levels of concentration and perseverance. Teaching was unsatisfactory during a dance lesson which resulted in pupils making unsatisfactory progress. Although the lesson was satisfactorily planned and prepared, weak management of inappropriate behaviour by some boys slowed the pace of the lesson and caused loss of interest or enjoyment amongst many pupils.
99. The school has a clear policy for swimming and records indicate that the majority of pupils reach expected standards in this aspect of physical education. Although satisfactory standards are reached in physical education, there is a lack of a detailed programme of work which makes sure that each year group has a clear plan in physical education which builds and extends upon pupils' skills. Resources for the subject are adequate but the hall is a thoroughfare and pupils and teacher are frequently disturbed during indoor physical education by people passing through.