

INSPECTION REPORT

Lytham Hall Park Primary School

Lytham St. Annes

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119315

Headteacher: Mrs CM Jenkinson

Reporting inspector: Mr JJ Peacock
25344

Dates of inspection: 14 -16 February 2000

Inspection number: 187905

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	South Park Lytham St. Annes Lancashire
Postcode:	FY 8 4QU
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	County Councillor Eric Bamber
Date of previous inspection:	29 th April 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated close to the town centre of Lytham near to the Fylde coast of Lancashire. Opened in 1973, the school building is of modern open design set in spacious grounds. The accommodation has been improved at regular intervals with still further additions planned for the future. An independent nursery with its own management committee has been established within the main building. This was inspected separately earlier this year.

The school caters for boys and girls from the age of four to eleven. Most pupils come from the surrounding estate of privately owned housing. Places at the school are sought after mainly because of the reputation for excellence which has been established over the past few years. Last year the school's very high achievements in all spheres were recognised with one of the first awards of "Beacon" status to a Lancashire school. A local authority appeals procedure is necessary each year to limit the intake to manageable levels. Classes are now larger than average for a school of this type and numbers have increased significantly since the previous inspection.

Children who are under five are admitted to two reception classes in September. At the time of the inspection, all 22 children in one class were under five. All 22 in the other class were aged five before or during February. The number of pupils who enter or leave during the school year is not significant. Some pupils who have moved away continue to travel to the school.

Number of full time pupils	265
Pupils with English as an additional language	1
Pupils entitled to free school meals	4.5% (well below average)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs average)	16.9% (in line with national average)
Number of pupils with a statement of special need	1.2% (broadly in line)
Average class size	33 (well above average)

The attainment of 70 per cent of four year olds when they start school in the reception class is above average but the full ability range is represented. Overall, attainment on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a most effective school where pupils of all ages and abilities achieve very high standards. This is largely because the leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent and the management provided by the governors and other key staff is of a very high quality. Other key factors are the quality of teaching which is very good throughout the school and pupils' excellent attitudes to their work. Almost all pupils are working at or near their capacity and achieving highly in most subjects. Standards are particularly good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in some aspects of music. Even though the school receives above average funding, it provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are very high in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in some aspects of music.
- The quality of teaching is very good. It has a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attitudes are excellent. They are proud of their school, keen to learn and mature in their behaviour. These factors have a significant impact on their academic and personal development.
- Pupils have excellent social skills and a very strong sense of moral responsibility.
- The headteacher, governors and staff form a very effective team which ensures that the school is exceptionally well led and managed. Pupils benefit greatly from their time at the school.

What could be improved

- The standard of handwriting throughout Key Stage 1.
- The use of computers to support or promote learning in all areas of the curriculum.

- Pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures within British society.

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

It is evident from the information above that the strengths of the school greatly outweigh its weaknesses.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When it was previously inspected in April 1996, Lytham Hall Park Primary School was found to be a successful school providing a good education for its pupils and rightly enjoying the confidence of its parents. The national test results for 1999 and for the previous two years, show that the school is sustaining high levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science with a greater proportion of pupils achieving Level 5. The school has built effectively on its previous success.

The quality of teaching has improved a great deal since the previous inspection when 16.4 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory, mainly because of a lack of challenge for pupils of higher attainment. The quality of teaching is now very good. Planning is now more specific for pupils of all ability levels and learning objectives are clearly defined. This enables detailed assessment to be undertaken and the results of this are used well by teachers to effectively plan future lessons. As a result, during this inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen and in 65 per cent of lessons, teaching was very good or excellent. In every lesson seen by the inspection team the quality of teaching was at least good. Additional resources have been provided for every area of the curriculum and teachers make good use of these in their lessons, particularly when involving pupils in experiments or investigations in science and mathematics. However, in information technology, the ratio of pupils to each computer (17:1) remains slightly below average. As a consequence, pupils do not have enough time to practise and develop their skills in information technology. Pupils' knowledge of other world religions is restricted because the school has few relevant artefacts or resources.

The headteacher formally monitors the quality of teaching on a regular basis. Procedures are effective as subject coordinators and governors are also involved in the monitoring process. The role of subject coordinators has been sharply defined and most subjects are now very well led. In seven of the National Curriculum subjects, coordinators have relevant training and expertise and this ensures they are able to support their colleagues very well.

The school improvement plan now clearly identifies relevant school priorities, is costed and each target is monitored rigorously by named staff or governors. A strategic long term view beyond the current year is included and this is closely linked to the income of the school. Attendance registers are now completed correctly, in line with legal requirements.

Many other improvements have been made since the previous inspection as the headteacher, staff and governors continually strive for excellence in all areas. This has led to the prestigious award of 'Beacon' status for the school. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A*	A*	A*	A
Mathematics	A	A*	A*	A
Science	A	A	A	B

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

Nearly all pupils are working at or near to their capacity and achieving well in terms of their prior

attainment. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics when compared to similar schools and above average in science. There is much 'added value' from when pupils start at the school. By the time they are five children exceed the standard expected of them in all areas of the curriculum for children of this age. Their skills in speaking and listening are particularly good.

The results of the 1999 national tests for seven year olds show that all pupils achieved the national target of Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In each of these subjects the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above average. In science, teacher assessments show that the percentage of pupils at both Levels 2 and 3 was very high.

By the age of 11, standards of attainment are very high in English and mathematics. The school's performance in these two subjects is in the highest five per cent nationally. Standards in science overall are well above average. In 1999, every pupil achieved Level 4 or above. However, on analysis a small group of very able boys were found to have over complicated their answers to some questions and lost marks as a result. This was sufficient to adversely affect the overall performance, making the school's results for Levels 5 and above broadly in line with the average for similar schools.

The results of the National Curriculum tests for Key Stages 1 and 2 show that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, reached the standards expected in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. At Key Stage 1, boys tend to out perform girls but by the end of Key Stage 2 the performance of boys and girls is virtually the same in all subjects. The school is taking steps to remedy this as class teachers were observed during the inspection making sure that boys did not dominate question and answer sessions or group work.

The work that pupils were doing during the inspection in English, mathematics and science confirmed the very high standards indicated by test results. Consistently high standards have been maintained over the past three years in all subjects and the school has maintained its above average performance in line with national improvements in average scores. Targets sets for next year in English and mathematics are realistic and aimed at maintaining the school's very high standards.

In information technology, standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those expected and by the end of Key Stage 2 they are above expectations for pupils of this age. In religious education, standards are at least in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus throughout both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. All pupils are enthusiastic about school, keen to learn and do well. As a result, they concentrate well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. All pupils relate positively to their teachers and to one another. They show considerable independence in their learning, working together in small groups with or without adult supervision. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is very high in comparison to other schools. Pupils enjoy coming to school and lessons start punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good and this is one of the factors which accounts for the very high standards in the school. During the inspection 31 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and of the 26 lessons graded, all were good or better with 10 of these being very good and seven excellent. High standards of teaching were seen in all classes throughout both key stages including the reception classes with children under five. This was a remarkable achievement as three classes were not taught by their normal teacher during the inspection, owing to staff illness or maternity leave.

The teaching of literacy is very good throughout both key stages and skills learnt during the literacy hour are used well in other areas of the curriculum. The teaching of numeracy is also very good. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate work to help them meet the targets set for them in their individual education plans and all make very good progress. Pupils of higher attainment are suitably challenged.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides a very good range of stimulating learning opportunities for pupils. Much emphasis is successfully placed on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. All areas of the curriculum fully meet statutory requirements. The curriculum for children under five is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Specific targets in pupils' individual learning programmes are used purposefully in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, the provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Pupils' moral development is excellent as teachers and other adults act as very good role models and promote moral values strongly. Pupils' social development is also excellent. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. However, few opportunities to raise awareness of or develop pupils' appreciation of other cultures are provided by the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Excellent procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Very good systems are in place to monitor pupils' academic performance and personal development. Procedures for assessing attainment and progress are good and good use is made assessments in teachers' planning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent leadership and management are key features in the school's success. The headteacher is an outstanding leader at the pinnacle of her career and provides excellent educational direction for the work of the school. All staff with management responsibilities work in close harmony with other teachers towards the common goal of maintaining the very high standards. All are fully committed to strive for excellence in all aspects of school life.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are extremely conscientious and deeply committed to the school. They make a substantial contribution to its effectiveness. All are knowledgeable and fulfil their statutory duties extremely well. Spending is strictly controlled and all governors are aware of the principles of best value. Financial planning and budgetary controls are excellent.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The work of the school is very well monitored and evaluated. The commitment to improve and capacity to succeed are excellent.
The strategic use of	The school is very well resourced in most areas. However, the provision of

resources	computer programs for pupils to use in their lessons is limited. Specific grants are used effectively for their intended purpose.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtually all parents are happy that their children like school. • Nearly all agree that behaviour is good. • The vast majority think their child is making good progress. • Virtually all parents think that teaching at the school is good. • All parents, except one, agree the school expects pupils to work hard. • Almost all parents who responded appreciate the way the school is led and managed. • They also agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like to be better informed about how their child is getting on. • Some would like to see the school work more closely with parents.

Inspectors' judgements wholeheartedly support parents' positive views. The level of negative responses by some parents on the aspects above are, in the view of the inspection team, unjustified. Some parents are being unrealistic in their demands on the school. Inspectors found the quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, to be very good. Pupils' annual reports are of a high quality. The pattern of meetings for parents to discuss their child's progress is similar to that in all schools.

The inspection team judged links with parents and the contribution of parents to their children's learning to be very good. However, information to parents about what is taught was not sent out last term. This may explain why some parents express a need to be better informed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Attainment in English, mathematics and science

Pupils at this school usually achieve very high standards in all subjects in the National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds. In the 1999 tests, pupils' results were very high in English and mathematics. When their performance is compared to that of pupils in similar schools, it is well above average in these two subjects. Last year, a small group of higher attaining pupils who were expected to reach the higher Level 5 in science failed to do so. A detailed analysis of their test papers found that they had over complicated their answers to some questions and lost marks as a result. Consequently, the overall performance in science was rated as well above average, rather than very high. Compared to similar schools, pupils' results in science in 1999 were still above average. Inspection findings show that standards of English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are very high. All pupils achieve at or near their capacity and make good progress in all classes.

The attainment of most children when they enter the two reception classes after their fourth birthday is above that normally expected for pupils of their age. Most have benefited from attending the school's independent nursery or other pre-school provision and settle quickly into school routines. When their normal class teacher had to leave school on urgent family business, children were quick to advise the relief teacher about the house points system! Almost all show confidence and above average levels of skill in speaking, listening and numeracy. Children under five are encouraged to work independently and lessons are carefully planned to achieve this. In a reception class physical education lesson, for example, children worked well together to tidy away large apparatus. All children, including those with special educational needs and those of higher attainment make good progress. This is mainly because of the very good teaching, an appropriate curriculum and the close support of classroom assistants and parent helpers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above average. Throughout the key stage, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and plan challenging tasks. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, all pupils were using dictionaries to list words alphabetically and to locate words using the initial letter while those of higher attainment had to use the second letter to order words correctly. In many lessons skills in literacy or numeracy are used effectively. In a mathematics lesson, the same pupils successfully estimated and measured the capacity of containers and compared their results. All competently described what they were doing and recorded their findings carefully. As a result, most pupils achieve well above average standards in all subjects and make good progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those of higher ability.

Pupils quickly learn to read fluently and by the age of 7 know how to tackle unfamiliar words. All are developing good library skills and can locate books quickly. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 express a preference for favourite authors and read confidently. Most are able to read expressively as they are taught this effectively. In a Year 3 poetry lesson, for example, pupils were encouraged to read a poem by Kit Wright called "My Dad" expressively to the class. Reading is used effectively to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils read instructions on worksheets carefully and follow instructions on computer programs. By Years 5 and 6, pupils read in silence for sustained periods each day. This successfully fosters a love of books as well as extending pupils skills.

Speaking and listening skills displayed by most pupils are well above average. Pupils benefit from the way they work together in small groups, often without the close support of teachers or classroom assistants. All readily engage an adult in conversation and sensibly discuss with each other the best way to solve practical problems. This was seen in a mathematics lesson on capacity when pupils in Year 2 discussed the best way to fill measures with water from a shallow bowl. In a Year 1 news session at the end of the day, pupils listened attentively to each other and described their work on collecting data for a graph well, using the correct terminology. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they can effectively summarise the different sides of an argument, clarifying the strengths and weaknesses of different positions. All use formal language well to develop an argument.

Standards of attainment in writing are well above average throughout the school. Writing skills are taught very well and teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects. In geography, pupils in Year 4 write about river deltas; in Year 3, they type poems and stories into a computer and in science in Year 6 they record the results of investigations with forces. Most use punctuation correctly and spelling is usually accurate. In Year 4, pupils regularly practise their handwriting and by the time they are in Year 6, all can write neatly with some style. However, throughout Key Stage 1, standards in handwriting are generally below those expected for pupils of this age. Letters are not always accurately formed or consistent in size. As a result, the presentation of work in many pupils' books appears untidy.

The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this is helping to maintain the high standards in English. Skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening learnt during these hour long sessions are contributing significantly to pupils' learning in all subjects of the curriculum. Much of the mathematics work pupils are given to do is of a practical nature. This was highlighted as an area for improvement in the previous inspection report and it has been successfully addressed. Teachers make good use of the space in the entrance areas and corridors to allow pupils space for these activities. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were observed measuring capacity using non standard measures. This involved them counting how many times a small container had to be filled to make up 1 litre of water. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' skills in using numbers and their competence at solving problems are well above average. Most 'round up' or 'round down' large numbers, weigh and measure and collect data to record on graphs. They thoroughly enjoy the challenge provided by their teacher and work well in groups to solve problems. As a result, all pupils make good gains in their mathematical knowledge.

Throughout Key Stage 2, work is carefully matched to pupils' capabilities. Pupils add and subtract decimals or fractions, use negative numbers confidently and interpret data from graphs correctly. Year 6 pupils were keen to find patterns in a series of numbers. One girl astounded everyone by finding and describing a pattern which even the teacher and inspector had difficulty following! This level of challenge ensures most pupils work conscientiously and, as a result, achieve highly in all aspects of mathematics. There is still much emphasis on using mathematical skills in practical ways even though class sizes are large. Older pupils use computers in the entrance area largely unsupervised and persevere well when they meet a problem such as a program failure. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, pupils' work in a Year 6 science lesson about forces was made easier because they had good knowledge of weights and were able to measure accurately.

The implementation of the national numeracy strategy has had a significant impact on pupils' numeracy skills. Each session begins with a 'quick fire' mental mathematics session and pupils enjoy the pace and challenge of these. All try hard to be the first to answer correctly. Class teachers make sure that everyone has a turn to answer and often ask those who have not put their hand up, ensuring that all give their full attention.

'Booster' classes in mathematics are provided for pupils of the highest attainment. These successfully challenge and extend the most able pupils to the extent that some will achieve Level 6 in mathematics by the time they leave the school. During the inspection, eight pupils were working with a teacher who had some expertise in mathematics. Pupils were introduced to working with letters rather than numbers to solve a mathematical problem. They were able to explain patterns, generalise and predict outcomes with confidence. Other pupils in their class welcomed the opportunity to take a leading part in the lesson in the absence of this group.

In science, the school has comprehensively addressed the criticisms in the previous report over lack of opportunities for practical work. Teachers give strong emphasis to investigative work, with pupils given the responsibility to work independently on their own or within a group. They are well motivated by appropriately challenging tasks and work hard to meet their teachers' high expectations of them. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were using a CD-ROM effectively to find out about bridge builders of the last century. Their concentration and interest ensures that standards in science are very high by the end of Key Stage 2. All pupils use correct scientific terminology well. They can explain the effects of heating or freezing on a substance and whether the change is reversible. They accurately make weather recordings, but rarely use computers to record their results in graphical form.

Music is perceived as a strength of the school by parents. This is wholly due to the quality of teaching provided by the member of staff responsible for music who takes all pupils at some time during each week. All of these lessons seen were judged to be excellent. Pupils in the reception class are taught to maintain the correct posture for singing and they display good vocal and aural skills. They enjoy singing and can hold and sing a note in tune. In Year 1, pupils add percussion instruments to their singing and create a performance for other pupils. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6, pupils show a keen sense of pitch, tempo and timbre. Their rendition of the evocative and dramatic "Daniel Jazz" was of a very high standard. Pupils who play in the orchestra are set a high level of musical challenge. Their performance of the theme music from "The Titanic" was excellent. Pupils have very good opportunities to sing or play an instrument. However, other areas of the national curriculum for music are less well developed. In some classes, pupils have limited opportunities to compose or appraise music.

The whole ethos of the school, constantly reinforced by the headteacher and staff, is to strive for excellence in everything. Teachers are effectively supported by classroom assistants or parents in all subjects. They plan interesting lessons and pupils respond accordingly. These factors ensure that pupils achieve very highly in all they do at this school. Standards have continued to improve from the time of the previous inspection four years ago.

The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is very good. It has improved markedly since the previous inspection and is now a strength of the school. It has a strong impact on the quality of learning for all pupils.

During the inspection, 31 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and, of these, 26 were graded by inspectors. Five were ungraded as inspectors saw little direct teaching because pupils were working independently in groups or were being supported by another adult. At the time of the previous inspection, 16.4 per cent of teaching was found to be unsatisfactory with only 9.6 per cent being very good. Four of the key issues requiring attention were associated with the quality of teaching. Teachers had to ensure higher attainers were better challenged, improve their planning, use assessment more effectively and provide more practical work in mathematics and science. The exceptionally high quality of teaching during the inspection period shows that all of these areas have been very effectively improved.

In the smaller sample observed during this short inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen and of the 26 lessons graded, all were good or better, ten were very good and seven were excellent. Very good or excellent teaching occurred in 65 per cent of all the lessons seen. Examples of very good teaching were seen in five of the eight classes and in all eight, good teaching was observed. This shows strength in depth and is even more remarkable as three classes were not being taught by their normal class teacher owing to staff illness and maternity leave. The main characteristics of this very good teaching were the pace of lessons, the level of challenge and the excellent discipline and control of pupils. In addition, the way in which teachers structured their lessons to make progressively greater demands on their pupils ensured all pupils concentrated intently throughout these lessons. Where teaching was excellent, teachers' knowledge of their subject, their rapport and relationships with pupils and the ability to make learning fun ensured all pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and achieved much.

When the very high standards in all subjects are taken into account, with the good procedures for assessing pupils' progress, the quality of teaching throughout both key stages, including that in the reception classes with children under five, is very good.

All teachers have a very good knowledge of all the National Curriculum subjects and prepare their lessons thoroughly by identifying precise learning objectives. In general, their expectation of what pupils should achieve is very good. The high standards which they set and insist that pupils deliver in their work provides much challenge for pupils of all abilities. The interesting tasks, of a practical nature in mathematics and science, ensure high levels of concentration. When pupils succeed, praise is forthcoming and this raises their self esteem, making them even more determined to do as well or better next time. This was exemplified in an excellent Year 2 mathematics lesson about capacity where the teacher carefully monitored the progress of each group and assessed their

performance whilst they worked. She was then able to provide feedback on how well pupils in each group were doing, sharing good ideas with all the class.

All teachers manage their pupils very well during whole class sessions or group work. Discipline in all classes is excellent. In most subjects teachers plan interesting lessons which capture pupils attention and ensure they work for long periods unsupervised. In the large classes, teachers often rely heavily on the support of classroom assistants to help supervise groups of pupils. Parents also help in some classrooms and contribute significantly to the high standards achieved and the good progress pupils make.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good. All teachers have fully embraced the national literacy and numeracy strategies and plan sessions carefully. Pupils' progress in these areas is regularly assessed and teachers ensure that they use the results of their assessments to plan future work carefully. As a result, pupils build on their prior knowledge well and make good progress. Skills taught in these sessions are used effectively in most other subjects. However, teachers' use of computers in the classroom to support pupils' work in literacy and numeracy is an area for development. For example, in the samples of pupils' work seen, there was little evidence of computers being used effectively to produce graphs in mathematics for example.

The amount, range, quality and use made of homework are good for all age groups. Parents fully support the school and regularly hear pupils read. Pupils are expected to do extra work in mathematics and English at home and often undertake research work using books or their computer. This helps to consolidate skills and maintain the high standards which the school expects of all pupils.

The quality of learning for all pupils is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate work and supported well in the classroom. They make very good progress and virtually all achieve the standards expected of them by the time they leave the school. Pupils of higher attainment and those of very high attainment are set challenging tasks which suitably extend them. The work seen in a mathematics session for a very high attaining group, where pupils were using letters rather than numbers to solve a mathematical problem, was challenging for the teacher as well as the pupils.

The amount of work all pupils produce and their commitment to finish tasks set for them is excellent. Their interest, level of concentration and independence when working cannot be faulted. The high standards of teaching together with pupils' excellent attitudes ensure all work to their capacity, whether they are with their normal teacher or not. The above average class sizes do not prevent any pupil from giving 100 per cent effort or receiving all the help and attention which is necessary.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour

All pupils at the school are highly motivated. This is due to a number of factors which include parental interest and support, the high standard of teaching and the level of care which ensures that all feel valued and important. The headteacher firmly believes that the early involvement in musical activities, particularly for boys, is another important factor. Emphasis is placed on singing and learning to play an instrument and boys and girls take part with equal enthusiasm. The many opportunities to perform gives all pupils confidence and raises their self esteem. All are proud of the school's successes over the years in local music festivals and fondly remember concerts at Christmas or those performed for senior citizens in the area. The self confidence and collective discipline which comes from performing has a direct impact on pupils' independence, their determination to do well and their levels of concentration, all of which are excellent. Inspectors found the quality of singing in assemblies, for example, to be spiritually uplifting.

All pupils work conscientiously at an excellent pace and produce work of a high standard. Almost all parents agree that their children like coming to this school and this is evident from the excellent attitude that pupils have towards their lessons. Pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to work hard in class is evident. In the 31 lessons observed attitudes were good or better in all of them. In almost half (14 lessons) pupils' attitudes were very good in nine they were excellent. Enthusiasm and a willingness to work was seen in all classes, even those of the youngest children. For example, children in the reception class were keen to perform a new song for the next class waiting for their

lesson to begin. Pupils in Year 1 quietly collect instruments and remind one another subtly when it is their turn to play. This level of cooperation ensures a performance of the highest quality. Older pupils enjoy using the computers and work for long periods unsupervised, often helping each other over difficulties. In Year 6, when a program failed, pupils persevered to reload rather than disturbing their busy teacher. The printed labels on pupils' exercise books give them added importance and most pupils show pride in their work. All listen well to instructions and quickly settle to work.

Relationships between pupils and with staff and parent helpers are very good. On many occasions pupils were seen co-operating well in groups. All show respect for each other's views and opinions, and willingly share resources or help each other. They treat all adults with respect and politely hold doors open or offer to help at every opportunity. In a Year 3 poetry lesson, pupils spontaneously applauded the performance of fellow pupils when they were trying to read verses with expression. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. No oppressive behaviour or incidents of bullying were observed. Indeed, it would be hard to imagine any problems of this kind in such a calm, orderly and supportive environment. All pupils fully understand the impact of their actions on others and show politeness and respect for one another at all times. The example set by the headteacher, class teachers and adult helpers constantly reinforces the considerate way everyone is expected to behave or talk to one another.

Pupils readily accept responsibility. The way they work and the opportunities provided by the school are very effective in raising pupils' self esteem. All take responsibilities, such as helping to serve hot lunches or taking registers to the school office, very seriously. The overall result is that pupils are mature and self disciplined. Their positive attitudes and excellent behaviour are important factors in helping the school to maintain its very high standards.

Pupils' moral and social development

Music plays an important part in the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to developing pupils' social skills. This was also recognised as a strength in the previous report. After only a short time in school, children in the reception class eagerly volunteer to sing for older pupils waiting for their music session. They performed with a confidence beyond their years!

All pupils look after each other very well and show justifiable pride in their school. The close relationship which exists between pupils and adults who work in the school help to sustain the happy atmosphere. Teachers and all other adults who work in the school help to foster positive values of respect, honesty and fairness. Pupils respond accordingly and are extremely polite and considerate towards one another. The way in which pupils behave and relate to one another has a positive impact on standards. There is a very good climate for learning throughout the school and all pupils work hard to achieve their potential.

The good range of extra curricular activities helps to further pupils' social development. Between 100 and 120 pupils regularly turn up on Saturday mornings to take part in sporting activities but the school also caters for minority interests such as those who like collecting stamps or taking part in drama or poetry competitions.

The provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. Parents are proud of the school's reputation in the wider community and 97 per cent of those who replied to the questionnaire agreed that the school is helping their child to become more mature and responsible. When interviewed, the headteacher of a local secondary school said it was easy to identify pupils from Lytham Hall Park School because of the sensible and mature way they behave towards other pupils. At playtimes and at the beginning of the school day, for example, older pupils take good care of younger ones and at lunchtime they help to serve hot food very sensibly.

Pupils of all ages are aware of the reasons for school rules to be observed, the main one being that pupils should not run inside school. Rules are kept to a minimum as the school's philosophy is to foster self discipline and an awareness of others. Good citizenship is constantly promoted, rewarded and celebrated. The school operates a reward by recognition policy and takes every opportunity to highlight best examples. Regular school assemblies celebrate pupils' achievements in all spheres of school life. All pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and are completely trustworthy.

Leadership and management

One of the main reasons for the success of the school is the excellent leadership and management. In the previous report, there was particular praise to the headteacher for her strong and positive leadership. This aspect appears to have strengthened even further. The headteacher is at the pinnacle of her career and relentlessly pursues excellence in everything to do with the school. Her experience, commitment, undoubted ability and vision provide excellent educational direction for work of the school. She is a source of inspiration to everyone. Very good relationships have been established with parents and the local community and all staff take a personal interest in every child from the moment they start school. Boys and girls have equal opportunities to take part in all areas of school life and this ensures that all pupils achieve their best and constantly try to do better.

The headteacher firmly believes in a collegiate style of management, with staff working together as a team. Key staff, such as the acting deputy headteacher and senior teachers of each section, meet regularly as the senior management team to evaluate current practice and identify targets for improvement. The role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened and developed in line with the recommendations in the previous report. Care has been taken to match subject areas of responsibility to teachers' own expertise and training and this has been achieved for seven subject areas. All coordinators are involved in ensuring that all subjects are taught effectively. They closely and systematically monitor colleagues' planning and teaching. Throughout, there is a shared commitment to improve and the 'learning team', a small group of teachers from both key stages, meet regularly to analyse pupils' test results in depth.

Priorities for improvement are aimed at raising further pupils' achievements. Information technology has correctly been identified as an area for improvement and this coincides with the provision of some new computers. However, the school remains slightly under resourced in this area compared to similar schools. The introduction of the national numeracy and literacy strategies was given careful consideration to ensure that pupils continued to do well in mathematics and English. In spite of pressure on the daily timetable, reading sessions continue to feature. This ensures that reading for enjoyment continues and specific skills such as scanning text for information or deduction are effectively taught.

The management of the school is in excellent hands. Governors are highly professional in their approach and fulfil their statutory duties well. All are knowledgeable and fully involved in shaping the direction of the school. Governors rarely miss meetings of the full governing body. For example, all but one were present at the meeting for governors prior to the inspection. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses as many visit on a weekly basis and often work alongside teachers in their classrooms. They ably support the headteacher in monitoring and evaluating current developments. The thoroughness of the school's response to the previous inspection is firm evidence of the effectiveness and dedication of the governing body. All of the key issues identified have been subject to close scrutiny following the formulation of the action plan and have been successfully dealt with. The school improvement plan, for example, is now fully costed and monitoring procedures and success criteria clearly identified. However, governors fail to include a budget for releasing subject coordinators from their classes when their subject is 'in focus'. All governors have trust in the headteacher, but expect her to be fully accountable to them. The quality of the headteacher's reports to governors is very good and ensures they are kept fully informed.

The governing body very effectively manages the school budget under the ever watchful eye of the chairman of the finance committee. The governors' entrepreneurial skills are fully utilised in schemes such as the creation of the independent nursery and after school club. These ventures create a valuable source of income for the school enabling additions such as the Millennium Hall to be built. There is a constant drive to continue upgrading and improving the accommodation to create the best possible learning environment for the pupils. The latest project is to develop a computer area large enough to take a full class of pupils. The school generally makes satisfactory use of new technology. However, budget details are still maintained manually on the instructions of governors. The latest Auditors report found no major faults with the school's accounts or financial procedures which shows the high level of care which is taken with the schools finances. The principles of obtaining the best value for money have become second nature. One governor complained that it was impossible to buy a box of matches without permission!

The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. Because of the larger than average numbers in most classes, the school spends a greater proportion of its budget than normal in providing additional support for teachers. The quality of support provided by the non teaching staff in all classes is very good. The adequacy of the accommodation is good overall. The large class sizes caused by the popularity of the school means that some classrooms, particularly in Years 3 and 4, are crowded. However, the excellent behaviour of the pupils minimises the effect of this on their learning. Teachers use the corridor areas next to their classroom well for activities such as art or computer work. Resources are plentiful for most areas of the curriculum. However, the range and variety of programs for computers is limited and this tends to restrict their use in supporting pupils learning in all subjects. The school has few resources or artefacts associated with the main religions of the world or the cultures of ethnic minority groups found in Britain. This adversely affects the quality of pupils' multicultural education.

The excellent leadership of the headteacher, the high quality of management, the hard working teaching staff, the very good level of parental support and pupils who want to do well in everything contribute to the school's excellent capacity to succeed and to be successful for the foreseeable future.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Handwriting standards

In the previous report, Inspectors noted that at Key Stage 1, pupils copy write, are shown letter formation and make steady progress in the development of writing skills. At Key Stage 2, inspectors noted that handwriting was taught on a regular basis and pupils responded well to the high expectations set on neatness and presentation. The findings in this inspection are not dissimilar. On a scrutiny of a representative sample of pupils' completed work, older pupils at Key Stage 2 were found to write neatly and with style. However, the work by pupils throughout Key Stage 1 was disappointing in its neatness and presentation. In a Year 1 English lesson it was noted that many pupils did not form their letters accurately or evenly. Most pupils in Year 2 and some in Year 3 are still not joining their writing, preferring to print. Examples of practice handwriting in pupils' workbooks show that teachers adopt different ways of forming some letters. This leaves pupils unsure about the style to follow when forming their letters. Standards in handwriting throughout the key stage are therefore generally below those expected for pupils of this age and ability.

Information technology

In the previous inspection, standards in information technology were found to be below average at Key Stage 1 but in line with the standards expected at Key Stage 2. There were limited opportunities to see the subject being taught and resources were under used. The situation has improved measurably since then. Standards, on inspection, were found to be above those normally seen at both key stages and all computers were being well used. Recently the school has invested wisely in new computers. Most have been grouped together and located in the entrance areas to classrooms or in corridors nearby. The ratio of computers to pupils is now within acceptable levels, but in comparison to other schools it is slightly below average. The number and range of programs is limited and this restricts the opportunities for pupils to use a computer in some subjects.

Pupils enjoy using computers and work well individually or in small groups sometimes supervised by an adult. They learn effectively. Pupils in Year 2, for example, competently use the keyboard to type their stories or create symmetrical patterns. In Year 3, pupils enter poems they have written and know how to change the font size and style. All confidently load, print and close the program but some need help to save their work. Year 1 pupils successfully instruct a mobile programmable toy to move forwards, backwards or turn.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above the standards expected nationally. A significant number of pupils have computers at home and this obviously helps with the development of skills. A scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed the high standards, particularly in word processing skills and handling data. Work showing evidence of the use of technology in controlling, measuring and modelling was more limited, but pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of this aspect. Most pupils are able to successfully modify sets of instructions to control events and compare the use of a computer

for data handling as opposed to a manual system. In Year 6, for example, pupils realise the need for precision in framing and sequencing instructions as they create a spiral movement with a mobile programmable toy.

Although standards are above those normally expected, the scrutiny of work and completed work on display in classrooms showed little evidence of computers being used effectively in all subjects, and in some classes there was more work than in others. This suggests that some teachers provide better opportunities than others for their pupils. There were some good links with other subjects. In science, for example, pupils used a CD ROM to find out about bridge builders of the last century. Pupils of all ages enjoy using computers and work conscientiously, showing high levels of concentration. Some are able to complete work on their computer at home, or undertake research for topics. As a result, most achieve well in the subject.

Opportunities for pupils to use computers to support or promote learning are not often identified in teachers' lesson planning. Skills in using computers are taught effectively and good use is made of classroom support assistants or parent helpers to supervise activities. However, as class sizes are larger than average, there is often no space within the class for a computer. This further restricts the access pupils have to school computers and consequently pupils do not make the progress they are capable of making in the subject.

Pupils' cultural development

The previous inspection report published in 1996 omits any reference to pupils' knowledge, appreciation or awareness of other cultures found within our society. It states that pupils' cultural development is encouraged through art, music and literature but no judgement about the effectiveness is made.

Overall, pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Very good opportunities are provided to promote pupils' own cultural awareness in art, drama, music and literature. Trips and visits are regularly planned to local places of interest and the school welcomes visiting drama groups or musicians. However, pupils' multicultural education is unsatisfactory.

The school closely follows the guidelines in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. In this, nine units out of the 42 to be covered during the seven years that pupils are in school relate to other religions of the world. The school correctly places emphasis on the main religious faith found locally, other than Christianity. Therefore, much work is completed by pupils about Judaism and most have a good knowledge of the main features and customs associated with it. Pupils in a Year 1 class say 'shalom' to the class teacher, for example when leaving for home. However, little work appears to take place in most classes on the world's other religions. The only reference found by inspectors was a large display in Year 5 about Rama and Sita from the Hindu faith.

When pupils were questioned, few could describe the festivals associated with Sikhism, Hinduism or Muslims faith. Teachers planning, other than in Year 5, does not include this particular aspect of pupils' development. Few opportunities appear to exist in art, music or literature to actively promote this important area and the school has few artefacts for pupils to examine. Some visits are arranged to local places of worship and on occasions, visitors representing faiths other than Christianity are invited to school. However, at present, pupils are not prepared well for life in our multicultural society.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now;

- 1) improve the quality of handwriting throughout Key Stage 1 by laying the foundations for a fluent joined style which is taught consistently from year to year.
- 2) provide more opportunities for pupils to use computers in all areas of the curriculum by:
 - increasing the number of computers and subject related programs;
 - ensuring that teachers are familiar with the programs that are available;

- incorporating the use of computers in lesson planning wherever possible.
- 3) improve the provision to raise pupils awareness of the diversity of cultures within British society by:
- planning more opportunities in areas of the curriculum such as art, music and literature;
 - actively encouraging visitors and arranging visits to inform pupils about other world religions and their customs.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
27	38	35	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		265
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

English as an additional language	
	1
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	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	17	19	19	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	36	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(94)	100(92)	100(86)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	36	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(94)	100(92)	100(100)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	17	21	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	37	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97(95)	97(89)	100(97)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	37	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97(95)	97(92)	97(95)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	219
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.2
Average class size	33

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	

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

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

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
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	£
Total income	412,194
Total expenditure	435,947
Expenditure per pupil	1,645
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,862
Balance carried forward to next year	10,109

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

75%

Number of questionnaires sent out

265

Number of questionnaires returned

200

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	32	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	58	36	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	25	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	44	9	0	2
The teaching is good.	72	26	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	44	20	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	30	10	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	18	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	43	17	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	76	20	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	28	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	53	6	2	3