

## INSPECTION REPORT

**Ingol Community Primary School**  
Ingol

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique Reference Number: 119239

Inspection Number: 188191

Headteacher: Mrs Karen McCarter

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lesley P A Clark  
25431

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707514

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
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ingol C P School Whitby Avenue Ingol PRESTON Lancashire PR2 3YP
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andrew Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	20 – 23 May 1996

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education and very good progress in most other subjects.

- The teaching is good or better in well over half the lessons and good teaching was seen in every class.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well; older pupils take their responsibilities very seriously as they contribute to the smooth running of the school.
- The school is very well led; there is an obvious commitment to continuous improvement.
- The school provides very well indeed for pupils' social and cultural development.
- The excellent range of extra-curricular activities plays a significant part in pupils' personal, social and intellectual development.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology are below the level expected of eleven-year-olds.
- II. Children under five in the reception class do not have enough opportunities to learn through practical activities.

**The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils in the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has developed well since its last inspection in May 1996. Although standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology are below the average expected nationally, pupils make good progress overall and progress is now more consistent throughout the school. This is an improvement, particularly at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is good and this is reflected in the pupils' good attitudes to work and their good behaviour. The school now makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development has also improved. The school has followed the recommendations of the last inspection to continue to develop its many existing strengths and provides challenges for higher attaining pupils. It continues to devise ways to raise attainment, particularly in English and mathematics. It has very good capacity for improvement.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Perform	Compared with	Compared with	
---------	---------------	---------------	--



ance in	all schools	similar schools
English	E*	D
Mathematics	E*	E
Science	E*	D

Key	
above average	well A
average	above B
	average C
average	below D
below average	well E

This table shows, for example, that standards in English were very low compared to all schools and below average compared to similar schools. **Standards are better than this.** Approximately one third of the school has special educational needs. The high number of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups affects overall averages from year to year. In most year groups, the proportion of higher attaining pupils is very small; this too affects overall comparisons with national statistics. Results at Key Stage 2 in 1999 were lower than previous years. This particular year group was affected by transience and interrupted teaching, thus affecting target setting as well as settled patterns of learning. One fifth of last year's Year 6 were excluded for disaffected behaviour.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good	Good

The quality of teaching is good overall. It was good or better in 67 per cent of the lessons and of these, 20 per cent were very good and five per cent were excellent. Teaching was satisfactory in 30 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in a very small percentage. Good teaching was seen throughout the school. The best teaching was seen at the beginning of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good: pupils are developing self-discipline in response to their teachers' good pupil management.
Attendance	Broadly in line with the national average. Compares favourably with similar schools and is improving.
Ethos*	Very good; commitment to raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem which has yet to have a full impact on the drive to raise standards.
Leadership and management	Very good; a particular strength is the very strong educational direction for the school provided by staff and governors. An area for further development is to analyse the content and results of the national standardised tests to work out which areas the pupils find most difficult.
Curriculum	Good; detailed planning with consideration for teaching objectives. Excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good; provision includes additional support for numeracy and particular targets for pupils.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good; particular strengths in social and cultural development which are very good. Lots of opportunities for pupils to reflect on the important issues in life.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory accommodation. Limited facilities and resources for children under five. Good resources for some subjects; adequate for information technology.
Value for money	Good.

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

### • **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>III. The school encourages children to get involved with much more than just their daily lessons.</p> <p>IV. Their children like coming to school.</p> <p>V. They find the school very approachable.</p> <p>VI. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.</p> <p>VII. Their children achieve good standards of work.</p>	<p>VIII. No significant concerns were</p>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views which were expressed by well over 90 per cent of parents and would place these strengths in a similar order to reflect the attributes of the school.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

i] In order to raise standards further in English, mathematics and science, the school should take the following measures:

- IX. analyse the content and results of the national standardised tests to work out which areas the pupils find most difficult and adjust the teaching accordingly;
- X. implement extended writing in English from an early age;
- XI. develop the use of numeracy in other subjects;
- XII. introduce consistent methods of pupils' recording and reporting in science.

ii] To raise standards in information technology, the school should:\*

- XIII. put into the practice the structured scheme which has been developed;
- XIV. improve the quality of resources and continue to develop staff expertise.

*\* The school has already identified this as an area for development.*

iii] In order to meet the developmental needs of children under the age of five, the school should:

- XV. Provide more opportunities for children to participate in practical activities;
- XVI. Provide opportunities within structured play for children to develop their skills in language;
- XVII. Provide additional training in pre-school development for teachers of children under the age of five.

There are very good systems in place to maintain the quality of education provided by this school. However, in the context of the school's many strengths the following minor point for improvement should be included in the action plan:

XVIII. Ensure that activities set for pupils to work on independently are carefully chosen to extend the learning of all pupils, including average attaining pupils, in a systematic and developmental way in order to achieve higher standards.

## · **INTRODUCTION**

### · **Characteristics of the school**

1 Ingol Community Primary school is situated in the middle of a large housing estate in a suburb of Preston. Originally built in 1969, the accommodation has since been extended and now provides eight large classrooms, a central hall, a shared practical area for infants and a library. An additional room, funded by the local education authority, is used as an after school club for the community.

2 The school is for boys and girls aged from four to eleven years old. There are 212 pupils on roll. Children are admitted to school in the September of the school year in which they are five. When they start school they attend full time. The younger children are accommodated in one reception class; a small number of older children are taught in a mixed reception and Year 1 group. At the time of the inspection 26 pupils were under the age of five. Their attainment on entry to school is well below average. Very few pupils have received pre-school education. The school currently benefits from Government funding to reduce class sizes: infant pupils are taught in four small mixed age classes, apart from the reception class. Junior pupils are taught in larger year group classes. There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection affecting the leadership and management of the school as well as a number of long-term absences. Two newly qualified teachers were appointed last year, one in September and one in January.

3 The school serves an area where there is a high level of unemployment and social deprivation. Over 80 per cent of pupils live in council owned accommodation. Approximately ten per cent of the school's population is transient. Although the school gained an additional 15 per cent of pupils within six months two years ago, numbers are now declining as parents in owner-occupied accommodation move out of the area. The number of pupils registered for free school meals rose by ten per cent this year to 45 per cent, which is well above the national average. Twenty nine per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, six of whom have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils with statements is above the national average as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, some of whom have behavioural as well as learning difficulties. Last year there were ten fixed term exclusions in Year 6. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language.

4 The school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with a strong emphasis on personal and social development. It is concerned to develop pupils' creative skills. Literacy and numeracy remain its key priorities and provide the main focus for learning throughout the school. Targets for 1999 – 2000 include developing information technology and striving to raise the standards of all pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15	19	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	16	17	16
	Total	25	26	27
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	74 (76)	79 (70)	80 (82)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	9	9	14
	Girls	18	18	17
	Total	27	27	31
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (73)	80 (73)	91 (85)
	National	Data not available (81)	Data not available (85)	Data not available (86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	20	13	33

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<b>National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	7	10
	Girls	10	6	9
	Total	16	13	19
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	48 (55)	39 (55)	58 (61)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
	Girls	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
	Total	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	42 (52)	45 (64)	48 (66))
	National	Data not available (65)	Data not available (65)	Data not available (72)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	3.5
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.39
	National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	10
Permanent	0

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	25
Satisfactory or better	98
Less than satisfactory	2



- **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**
- **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**
- **Attainment and progress**

5 The previous inspection report of 1996 found that pupils were generally achieving standards below the national average at both key stages in English and mathematics and achieving standards closer to the nationally expected levels in science. Pupils' performance in the national tests of 1996, however, was well below the national average. Then, as now, the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs affected the school's overall performance. Since the last inspection, pupils' progress has become more consistent and is now good at both Key Stages in English and science and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. The particularly strong teaching at the beginning of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 is having a significant effect on overall standards for most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs.

6 Attainment on entry to school is well below average; in particular, children have poor language skills and their personal and social development is much lower than that expected. They make satisfactory progress in all their areas of learning. Their attainment has improved but by the age of five it is still well below the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. Although children begin to talk more freely, their speech is unclear and restricted by limited vocabulary and immature sentence construction. They enjoy listening to stories and know that letters make sounds. Most cannot write their names without assistance. They discover interesting facts about their world; for example, that stars come out at night. They become physically more confident as they explore the apparatus in the hall, learning how to jump and to balance safely. It takes them a very long time to get changed and about half the class require adult assistance with their clothing. Many children find it difficult to hold a pen correctly and their drawings are very immature for their age.

7 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the national average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. The 1998 test results indicated that pupils' attainment was well below average in reading and writing and above the national average in speaking and listening compared to all schools. Performance over time in English indicates an improving trend which inspection judgement confirms. In mathematics, in the 1998 national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' attainment was close to the national average. Since 1996, results have improved consistently and this trend continued in 1999, though set against national figures pupils' performance over time was still well below average. Inspection evidence confirms well below average attainment at this key stage in mathematics.

8 By the time pupils leave school, their attainment in English, mathematics and science is below average. They have made good progress since starting school. The results of the 1998 tests indicate that pupils attain well below average standards in English and mathematics and below average standards in science. Pupils'



performance in 1999 indicates very low attainment compared to all schools, and well below average attainment in maths and below average attainment in English and science when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The discrepancy between inspection evidence and performance data is not as marked as would first appear. Approximately one third of the school has special educational needs. The high number of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups affects overall averages from year to year. In most year groups, the proportion of higher attaining pupils is very small; this too gives an unfavourable comparison with national statistics. Results at Key Stage 2 in 1999 were worse than previous years. This particular year group was affected by transience and interrupted teaching, thus affecting target setting as well as settled patterns of learning. One fifth of last year's Year 6 were excluded for disaffected behaviour. The comparative performance of boys and girls varies from year to year in English, mathematics and science. The school does not analyse performance according to gender or ethnic background. Girls perform slightly better at Key Stage 1 in English than boys and at Key Stage 2, boys perform slightly better than girls in mathematics and science. During the inspection there were no noticeable differences between the performance of boys and that of girls.

9 Several other factors contribute to below average attainment in English, mathematics and science. There is no formal analysis of the content of the national tests to determine which specific areas the school needs to focus on in order to raise standards. Lessons are sometimes too dependent on the performance of the teacher rather than on the progress of the pupils. In English, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length. Independent activities within the literacy hour and numeracy lessons are not sufficiently well planned in all classes to enable pupils to make progress through consolidation of what they know and understand. The successful implementation of the numeracy strategy is beginning to have an effect on standards in mathematics but there is no structured approach for reinforcing mathematics through other subjects such as science or geography. In science, pupils are not encouraged to write up their investigations, label diagrams, draw conclusions or tabulate results with any degree of consistency until Year 6. The much more tightly structured science curriculum, introduced this September, now ensures that topics are revisited and taught in greater detail, as pupils grow older, though its impact at the present time is limited.

10 Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress over time in English, mathematics and science. Progress in English and science is good at Key Stage 1 and this good progress is maintained at Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress at both key stages in developing skills in speaking and listening. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils make the most progress at the beginning of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 in response to the consistently very good teaching they receive in those classes. Pupils come to school with very limited language skills. During their time in school they learn to listen more closely, give fuller answers to questions and become better able to articulate their thoughts more coherently. They learn to write with increasing accuracy and in a wider range of styles. They tackle an increasing range of texts in reading; higher attaining pupils begin to make inferences about characters and events in fictional works. The increased emphasis on mental arithmetic skills in numeracy lessons is already having a positive impact on pupils' mathematical knowledge and their use of mathematical language. By the age of eleven, higher and

average attaining pupils begin to apply their scientific knowledge to work out problems such as how shadows are formed and what changes occur and why in relation to an object's proximity to the source of light. Pupils use the school and the public library well to research information.

11 Pupils' attainment is below the level expected of seven and eleven-year-olds in information technology. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key stage 2. The recent development to teach information technology as a separate subject has had too little time to have an impact on standards. The progress of pupils at Key Stage 1 is hampered by the lack of printers so pupils cannot see the results of their work. At Key Stage 2, opportunities to use information technology to support other subjects are limited pending the upgrading and networking of all the school machines. Pupils' attainment in religious education, by the end of Key Stage 2, is broadly in line with the level expected of eleven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection, which found pupils' attainment and progress to be better at Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have some awareness of well-known Bible stories. They learn about different rituals and ceremonies and understand the concept of respect for other faiths and traditions. At Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they develop their understanding of other faiths. Older pupils discover that stories in the Bible relate to their own lives and begin to contemplate the significance of different aspects of world religions.

12 Pupils make satisfactory progress in music and physical education. They make very good progress in art, design and technology, geography and history where much of their work is at the nationally expected level and above average in some aspects of art and design and technology. Overall, pupils' attainment and progress has improved since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2.

#### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

13 Pupils have good attitudes towards learning. Most pupils are eager to learn and concentrate well, with the help of skilful teaching to give them clear, positive prompts about the behaviour expected of them. Children under the age of five listen well. They learn to take turns and raise their hands to answer questions or to contribute to discussions. Although their co-operative and social skills are quite limited they are willing to learn and want to please their teachers. In a physical education lesson children made their way very quietly to the hall and within three minutes quickly helped the teacher to set out all the equipment required for the lesson. They participate enthusiastically in activities which interest them and concentrate appropriately though most still need adult support to help them to complete their tasks. They behave well.

14 Pupils throughout the school generally want to learn. They listen to the teacher and to each other with respect, learning from different points of view. They like to show adults their work and are proud of their achievements. Pupils develop more mature attitudes towards their work as they grow older. Most pupils settle down quickly and concentrate well though a small number work slowly, finding it hard to concentrate for very long without adult support to help them to learn. Pupils are very keen to answer questions and as they grow older, both ask and answer questions more fully so as to help them to learn. In a religious education lesson, for example, pupils questioned

quite intently the significance of baptism, recognising its importance. They admire their teachers' skills and try to emulate them.

15 Pupils throughout the school have a planned timetable for homework. Most of this work is directed at basic skills such as reading and spelling. Some younger pupils are asked to draw or name places within the local area. Older pupils are given work which requires researching information at the local library. They are encouraged to borrow books from school. This fosters their capacity for personal study, and helps develop the self-discipline needed in later stages of education.

16 The expectations for behaviour in the school are high and most pupils respond positively. Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. Each classroom has the expectations for behaviour clearly displayed through a set of class rules, and rewards are given for pupils trying hard to work within them. This gives a clear framework for behaviour and encourages pupils. There is a Behaviour Modification Club held during designated morning breaks, where pupils can come if they are deemed to have broken significant rules. This gives them the opportunity to discuss their behaviour and start again with a clean sheet. There are a small number of challenging pupils who require extra support to modify their attitudes and behaviour. The most skilled teachers and non-teaching assistants support these pupils in a positive way, giving praise and avoiding confrontation. The school building is treated with respect and pupils look after books and equipment carefully. Exclusions during the last school year were the result of disaffected behaviour from a small number of pupils who have now left the school.

17 The very good relationships formed between the pupils and staff, and between groups of pupils are a strength of the school, and have a direct impact on the good progress pupils make. Pupils and teachers enjoy working together and share a similar delight in imaginative games and drama. Relationships are quite affectionate between pupils and teachers as pupils respect their teachers' consistently even-tempered and good-humoured approach and response. Pupils work collaboratively when required and are given early opportunities to do so. Marking of work is usually personalised and, with the older pupils, frequently develops into a dialogue which pupils greet with enthusiasm. These shared responses are often touchingly expressed and show the confidence and trust which pupils place in their teachers' good guidance and judgements. Many pupils attend the numerous extra-curricular clubs both at lunchtime and after school which are run by staff and for some clubs there is a waiting list. Pupils respond very well to activities involving group and teamwork; for example, the board game club which teaches pupils how to play games together and enriches school relationships. Parents consider that encouraging their children to get involved with much more than just daily lessons is the aspect of the school they most like.

18 The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils respond very well to responsibility and carry out their duties efficiently and unobtrusively. Older pupils are encouraged to help around the school in a variety of ways and do a number of very responsible jobs, such as looking after the office during lunchtime. They help younger pupils, and work well with partners who need additional support during some lessons. Many pupils are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning and homework contributes well to this. Young pupils are developing some independence in the classroom by finding and tidying away their own resources.

· **Attendance**

19 Attendance is good; it has improved since the previous inspection and compares favourably with similar schools nationally. Registration procedures are prompt and efficient. The school requires parents to notify reasons for absence on the first day that their child is away and the vast majority does so. Unauthorised absence from school is minimal. Most pupils arrive at school on time and clear routines throughout the day ensure that lessons begin on time.

· **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

· **Teaching**

20 The quality of teaching is good overall and plays an important part in enabling pupils to make good progress. In 68 per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching was good or better. Of those lessons, 25 per cent were very good and five per cent were excellent. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in 30 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in two per cent. The latter was largely the result of inexperience. The best teaching was seen in the mixed reception and Year 1 class and in the Year 6 class where half the lessons seen were very good or better.

21 The quality of teaching of children under the age of five is satisfactory overall though there are some good features. The strengths lie in the imaginative activities and materials designed to interest children and to make them want to learn. Teachers have good strategies for managing children's behaviour and use support staff well to assist children who have special educational needs. The room is set up satisfactorily for independent play. Lesson planning is satisfactory. Although carefully planned to the desirable learning outcomes, the teaching does not take into sufficient account the needs of most children whose attainment is well below average and who have had no pre-school education. There are too few planned opportunities for learning through creative play for pupils to experience a wide variety of practical tasks within a short space of time. Teachers miss opportunities to reinforce language development or number recognition through songs and rhymes or social occasions such as milk time.

22 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages and good lessons were seen in every class, including the lessons for children under the age of five. Pupils with special educational needs receive good teaching and their work is well suited to their individual needs. They receive very good support to enable them to achieve the targets set in their individual education plans.

23 Where the quality of teaching is satisfactory, lessons are well planned and teachers have sound subject knowledge. Their expectations of what their pupils can achieve are realistic. Lessons are methodical and pupils well organised. The planning identifies separate activities for the different attainment groups within the class though the level of challenge is inconsistent. This means that average and lower attaining pupils do not make the consistent progress particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons they should through carefully planned independent activities designed to enable them to build on what they know and understand. A very small number of

lessons become unsatisfactory because of teachers' inexperience in behaviour management. A lack of clear focus and insecure questioning techniques combine to slow the pace of these lessons and restrict pupils' learning.

24 Where the quality of teaching is good, clear, direct whole class teaching enthuses pupils. Lessons are well planned and have clear objectives for different attainment groups. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they know how to make lessons interesting; for example, "Wiggles" the glove puppet delights young pupils in mathematics lessons because he is not very good at mental arithmetic and they love to point out where he has gone wrong. Short introductory sessions are well focused and set the tone for pupils to work purposefully. Teachers have good organisation and control and expect high standards of behaviour. Teachers' planning is very good and enables pupils to make good progress. Marking is of a high standard and contributes well to raising standards of attainment.

25 Where the quality of teaching is very good, teachers generate such interest that pupils ask lots of questions and quickly become absorbed in their tasks. The work challenges all abilities and teachers expect high standards in written and oral commentaries. Teachers use the time very well to ensure lessons have momentum so that pupils learn to work quickly and efficiently. High expectations and appropriate challenge create an atmosphere of discovery. The lessons are very well planned. An excellent feature of the planning evident in a very small number of lessons is the precise focus for teacher assessment so that teachers begin to assess the effectiveness of their teaching through noting what pupils have learnt and whether their methods were successful.

26 The quality of teaching is better than that reported in the last inspection and the weaknesses noted in the teaching at Key Stage 2 have largely been rectified. The strength noted in 'supportive and constructively critical marking' is apparent still and a variety of teaching strategies continue to be used. Generally, most teachers prepare the initial teaching sessions better than the activities they set the pupils. These are not always carefully chosen to extend the learning of all pupils in a systematic and developmental way. Whilst most tasks are challenging for higher attaining pupils, teachers do not always enable the average attaining pupils to achieve higher standards. Much independent work depends on pupils' ability to fill in worksheets rather than to write extended answers in literacy for example, or present results of investigations, in science, using their own ideas. Good teaching was seen throughout the school in English, science and religious education and in mathematics, at Key Stage 2. Teachers use homework well to support the work pupils do at school.

27 Teachers implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies fully and these are beginning to have an impact on standards. Group work is well organised and the increased emphasis on mental calculation is already having a positive impact on pupils' mathematical language and understanding. Sometimes, independent activities within the literacy hour are not sufficiently well planned in all classes to enable pupils to make progress through consolidation of what they know and understand. Plenary sessions are used effectively to assess and celebrate learning. Literacy is promoted through most areas of the curriculum, and is given a high priority throughout the school whereas numeracy is incorporated into the teaching of other subjects only if the opportunity arises.

## · **The curriculum and assessment**

28 Children under the age of five receive an unsatisfactory curriculum though it is based on the nationally recommended areas of learning. Many of these pupils enter school with well below average levels of attainment. The curriculum does not offer sufficient opportunities to use large equipment and wheeled toys, structured play and activities designed specifically to enrich children's spoken language and social interaction. The planning links carefully to the early stage of the National Curriculum and elements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are incorporated. The nursery nurse and teacher for special educational needs are fully involved so that their time is used most efficiently and effectively to help children to learn. Teachers keep detailed assessments of what children know and can do and records of their attainment in accordance with the nationally agreed areas of learning are kept. These do not influence sufficiently well, however, what children are taught.

29 The school provides a good curriculum which is broad and balanced as well as giving sufficient time to developing the basis skills in literacy and numeracy. Policies and schemes are in place and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. Time is allocated appropriately to meet the priorities of the school development plan. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught through science and personal and social education. Physical education includes swimming for Year 6. Additional Literacy Support is in place for Years 3 and 4. There is equality of access and opportunity. The school ensures that all pupils, whatever their attainment or background, are given every opportunity to benefit from all facets of the curriculum and additional associated activities.

30 The school has implemented fully the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Detailed lesson planning is linked to the policies and objectives shown in medium-term plans. All the elements of both the literacy and numeracy strategies are included in lessons and group work is well organised. The recommended framework for organisation is closely followed.

31 Curriculum planning is very good at both key stages. Long-term plans provide for mixed age group classes, ensuring that pupils undertake work appropriate for their age group. Medium-term plans are clearly linked to the long-term plans through the schemes of work and the half-termly plans. Short-term plans are detailed and give a clear idea of the activities in which the pupils are to be involved. Short-term plans are monitored and evaluated very well, and records are kept of the basic skills pupils develop. Some schemes of work list the pre-requisite skills needed for each area of study to ensure that pupils can be properly prepared. Where this is used, it enables teachers to reach the objectives they have set for their pupils and enables them to plan more challenging tasks for the small number of higher attaining pupils.

32 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good at both key stages. Pupils are identified early and the well-informed special needs co-ordinator helps draw up effective individual education plans to help them to learn. These plans include targets for developing both language and number as well as behaviour modification elements where appropriate. The head teacher and the special needs teacher share the teaching of special needs groups within literacy lessons, and pupils

receive appropriate work to develop their skills during the 'word level' and 'guided reading' sessions. Support assistants are used well and are fully involved in the planning of activities for the pupils they support. Additional teachers from outside agencies also support pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties and advise staff when necessary.

33 Extra curricular provision is excellent. There is a very wide variety of activities on offer at lunchtime and after school. Some of these activities are deliberately targeted at Key Stage 1, and these pupils benefit greatly. Activities target the needs of pupils to learn social skills by teaching playground games and higher attaining pupils are encouraged to join the newspaper club to develop their literacy through producing a school newspaper each term. Sports and fitness clubs are popular, and parents are involved in running them. Further links with the community are made through the 'Parents and Kids Club' where parents come to join in activities with their children. Clubs such as cookery and music help to further develop pupils' practical skills.

34 The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory. Teachers plan assessment activities in their half-termly plans for each subject. Standardised tests are also used regularly, and the results of all tests are recorded to track the progress of individual pupils. Folders are kept which hold assessments for each pupil and form a good record of achievement. This information forms the basis for target setting and informs reporting to parents. Portfolios of work are planned, but assessing and comparing work to national standards is at an early stage of development. At both key stages marking is supportive of the pupils, and comments are both developmental and sensitive. Planning is evaluated and used to decide upon the next step. National tests are insufficiently analysed to highlight areas of weakness in order to raise standards.

35 Since the last inspection detailed schemes and guidelines for each subject have been put in place, providing a good basis for the short-term planning. Monitoring of the curriculum has improved and is now good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved from an already good level, and is aiding this significant number of pupils to make good progress towards their targets. Their support time is carefully chosen so they still receive good access to the whole range of the curriculum. The range for extra-curricular activities has been extended in order to complement the rest of the curriculum and specific groups of pupils are targeted if it is felt that they might benefit from particular after-school or lunchtime clubs.

#### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

36 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The school makes very good provision for social and cultural development.

37 Statutory arrangements are met for collective worship which provides ample opportunities for reflection and consideration of universal issues. Acts of worship during the inspection offered opportunities to reflect on the theme of forgiveness. A particularly telling example was explored when considering 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' In Key Stage 2 opportunities for discussion of literature provide

thought-provoking experiences. Learning through discovery is sometimes emphasised as an important part of learning in some classes. The spiritual dimension has improved significantly since the last inspection.

38 Pupils clearly distinguish right from wrong. Teachers and classroom assistants set an excellent example for pupils. A suitable and consistent emphasis is placed on rewarding appropriate behaviour and on positive moral standards. Pupils understand the necessity for rules in a community and respect the rights of others. They know that bullying is unacceptable. Many pupils feel that school is a source of support and appreciate why high standards are continually stressed. At all times - and particularly in 'circle time' - teachers take the opportunity to encourage pupils' self-esteem and respect for others. This promotes a responsible community spirit.

39 The school encourages mutual respect and teamwork. This has a positive impact on day to day interactions in school. Social development is nurtured throughout the infant classes as pupils are encouraged to share equipment and to play co-operatively. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in the classroom, and older pupils use considerable initiative. For example, pupils in Year 6 administer the school bank and organise younger pupils in board games activities. Social development is enhanced by the school's support for charities. Discussion time is used effectively to encourage pupils to listen to each other's views and to share their feelings. Residential visits for Year 6 pupils provide opportunities for social mixing with other pupils and with teachers.

40 Provision for cultural development is a significant strength. Visitors to the school are many and varied. Authors, poets, actors, musicians, have all had considerable impact on the lives of the pupils. Year 6 pupils enjoyed an African drumming demonstration which was later incorporated in one of their music lessons. The school has been effectively involved in a joint project with the Hallé orchestra. European culture is well developed through the teaching of French each week after school. A 'book week' has been organised in each of the last two years and members of the governing body visit the school to read stories to pupils. There are two productions each year which are of very good quality and enable both juniors and infants to perform in front of an audience. This greatly benefits their skills in speaking and listening as well as their skills in performance. Many parents come to these and to the class assemblies and appreciate the invitation to stay for coffee and to look at the work going on in school. During the inspection, children under the age of five presented a very polished assembly and shook their home-made shakers to some African music. A wide range of western artists is studied. There is a good range of books with a multi-cultural theme. The school has welcomed visits from several well-known figures in the educational world including Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools.

· **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

41 The school provides good support, advice and guidance and a pleasant environment for all its pupils, including children under the age of five. It is a caring community and provides a happy family atmosphere. Staff know children well and value their opinions and contributions to school life. Parents are happy that the staff respond to pupils as individuals and that their children like school.



42 There is a clear policy for behaviour and discipline which is well understood by pupils and staff. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and provide good role models for children to learn from. Praise and encouragement are also well used to help pupils meet the standards expected, although in a small minority of lessons positive and constructive methods are not well developed. The school encourages good relationships and behaviour in school is managed effectively and promoted well. For example, awards are given to one class in each playground at the end of breaks and lunchtimes. The overall winners are rewarded at the weekly merit assembly to which parents are invited, along with those who have received individual recognition for good work or good conduct in school during the week. A club is run each morning when the few pupils who do not respond satisfactorily to the system of rewards miss break and work with staff until their behaviour reaches a satisfactory level. The school has very good measures in place to respond to any threatening behaviour should it occur.

43 Good procedures are in place for child protection and promoting the pupils' well-being. The school has a very good policy to guide staff which incorporates local guidelines. Staff and governors are aware of health and safety issues. Good procedures are adopted to ensure a high level of supervision, safe movements around school and quick response to potential hazards. The school is responsive to pupils' needs and works well with outside support agencies. In particular, staff are willing to spend significant time and effort supporting pupils with academic and personal difficulties.

44 The school has very good formal and informal procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' academic progress and personal development. Assessment of pupils' skills soon after entry to the reception class helps in establishing targets for progress which are tailored to individual needs. Portfolios are compiled for each pupil as they move through the school. They contain samples of their work together with teachers', parents' and pupils' comments. Pupils compile a record of achievement booklet which notes their progress in a wide range of skills as well as their participation in events. Pupils' personal development is well monitored by a range of information contained in regular assessments and end of year reports. The school recognises the valuable contribution which parents can make to their children's success in school and offers a variety of means by which issues related to pupils' progress may be discussed and supported between home and school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in discussions about the support available in school and how children can be helped at home. Parents are particularly satisfied that care is taken by staff to provide the right support and motivation for individuals.

45 Good attendance is well monitored and promoted through practice which supports the strict school policy for formal notification of absence and the follow-up of any unnotified absence. The school attempts to instil into pupils the importance of arriving at school in good time for lessons each morning. Good procedures to help new starters and their parents become familiar with school, which include visits to homes by staff and visits to sample school life for pupils and parents, help children to settle quickly. Pupils moving class at the end of the academic year have the opportunity to visit their new classroom for a full day before school breaks up for the summer holiday. Very good professional links with the main secondary school to which pupils transfer,

which include several visits to classes by secondary staff and sample lessons and shared projects for pupils, provide a good foundation for pupils moving to the next stage of their education. These aspects have been strengthened since the last inspection.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

46 The school has a good relationship with parents and the local community. Staff work hard to provide parents with a wide range of high quality information and good opportunities to be involved in the work of the school. Parents feel very welcome in the school and appreciate the opportunities to visit special assemblies, concerts and classrooms when appropriate. There are good induction procedures in place and home visits prior to children starting school help to make children under the age of five feel confident. The school encourages regular informal contact for new parents through its weekly after school club for parents and children.

47 The quality and range of information for parents is very good. Parents are satisfied that the school gives them a clear understanding of what is taught and that they are well informed about their children's progress. The prospectus gives a good outline of school procedures and the ways in which home and school can keep in touch. It extends a very clear welcome to parents who wish to become involved in their children's life at school and contains various suggestions of ways in which parents can work with staff to support their children. Written reports on pupils' progress and development are personal to individuals and give parents a very good picture of how their children are performing. Parents are provided with the opportunity to contribute to the reports and to discuss them with staff. One additional formal consultation session is arranged yearly. A very good feature of this school is that teachers invite parents to drop in and discuss any aspect of their children's education at appointed times each half-term. Parents receive weekly newsletters and information on the topics which their children will be studying each half-term. In addition, meetings are arranged between staff and parents to share information on new developments in the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy lessons, which are followed by invitations to visit classrooms to see the new lessons in action. Parents are satisfied that staff are approachable, open-minded about suggestions and willing to talk, should they wish to raise an issue or need any further information.

48 Parents are provided with a wide range of opportunities to become actively involved in the life of the school. They enjoy attending events which directly involve the children, such as assemblies and concerts as well as social and fundraising occasions but are less inclined to join courses run by staff to develop understanding of curriculum areas and skills to enhance support for pupils through homework. However, a significant number of parents recently took up the opportunity to visit classrooms to view literacy work and to join in a history lesson on Victorian school life. Parents overall are well involved with helping their children at home through clear guidance on what work is expected and suggestions of associated games and activities. Reading books are taken home frequently and a programme of other tasks is drawn up for each class and passed on to parents. Homework and Reading Diaries are provided as a further means of communication between home and school and these are well used, although

this system has become more strongly developed with parents of younger pupils than those of older pupils. Some particularly outstanding features of this school is the commitment of staff to involving parents fully in school life and the contributions made by those parents who work around school voluntarily by some parents. A series of very good initiatives are organised by the school and parents. Some have led to training and employment for parents who were originally voluntary helpers, and who continue to give additional time as volunteers. Resource libraries and clubs which provide books and games for parents and children to use together at home are very well managed by volunteers and staff together. There is an association of parents who work hard to organise successful social events which bring together the main body of parents and raise funds for extra resources for the benefit of all children.

49 Links with the community are good. The school works well in partnership with other schools locally, sharing the development of new initiatives and projects, as well providing opportunities for pupils to meet children and staff from other schools. The school has a good relationship with local residents. Pupils visit elderly neighbours who in turn are guests of the school at social and fundraising events. Links are in place with a local church which receives pupils as visitors. Children donate their harvest gifts in the area and raise funds for a range of charities throughout the year. The school makes good use of visitors and excursions to extend pupils' experiences and support their work in school. For instance, pupils have worked with actors, authors and musicians and visited a zoo, pier, airport, museums and other places of interest. The immediate locality is also used to provide information for geography and history. The school has some well established links with businesses which provide opportunities for curriculum based visits.

50 The school has maintained the good links with parents and the community which were found during the previous inspection. These continue to make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and the progress which they make in school.

- **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

- **Leadership and management**

51 The leadership and management of the school are very good and provide a very clear educational direction for the school. The headteacher is highly organised and efficient and believes most strongly that the most effective decisions are corporate. To this end, committee structures of both staff and governors are securely in place and ensure that educational decisions are based on joint decisions to the educational benefit of the pupils. Many pupils come from under-privileged backgrounds and the leadership is concerned to develop pupils' social and personal skills through creative and artistic activities as well as enabling them to become literate and numerate. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities plays a significant part in achieving this aim of enriching pupils' personal development. Although the leadership and management has changed since the last inspection, the qualities noted then of 'innovative and energetic leadership' are evident now. There is a strong partnership between the headteacher, the very recently appointed deputy, the chair of governors, the staff and

the governing body, all of whom have clearly defined responsibilities.

52 The governing body is closely involved in the school and individual governors observe lessons and comment on how the school is managed. The governing body ably fulfils its role as a critical but supportive “friend” and demonstrates the same level of dedication and commitment seen in the staff of the school. It has a strategic view of how the school should develop and has a commitment to higher achievement though an unclear idea of how this might be attained other than through very good teaching. It is fully involved in all aspects of the school; in particular, it offers support to curriculum planning, including planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

53 The headteacher has a substantial teaching commitment in terms of time, spending each morning in literacy and numeracy lessons throughout the school with pupils who have special educational needs. She has put in place some very good procedures to monitor teaching and curriculum development, and instituted a planned programme for curriculum co-ordinators who have regular time out of class to monitor the planning, teaching and learning in their subjects. All staff have responsibility for particular subject areas and they fulfil these roles ably and conscientiously. An area requiring further development is to analyse the content and results of the national standardised tests to work out which areas the pupils find most difficult and adjust the teaching accordingly. Formal appraisal procedures are in place and very well managed by the deputy headteacher who co-ordinates appraisal, in-service training and liaison between the three curriculum development teams headed by members of the senior management team. In this way, teaching, as well as learning, is fully supported by a comprehensive structure. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher set very high standards for themselves and others. The school development plan is a very good working document and is a mixture of necessary actions and creative forward planning. This strategic planning is closely linked to finances and resources. Set to a realistic time-scale, it is evaluated and used very much as the dynamism for the school’s development.

54 The school has a very good ethos for learning. The leadership and management are rigorous in terms of the standards they set and their commitment to train and improve teaching. The same level of commitment is demonstrated in the support of the governing body. Although standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology are not high, pupils who can attain highly are enabled to do so and those who find learning difficult nonetheless make good progress and enjoy their work. Assemblies contribute to this, promoting the values of the school and celebrating the achievements of pupils in different subjects in every class as well as promoting their personal and social development. In this way, the school’s values underpin the working structure of the day. Parents are very supportive of the school and recognise that the school’s very good ethos for learning is the result of the dedication of the staff and the leadership and management. All statutory requirements are met. The school has very good capacity to continue to improve.

#### · **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

55 The school has a good number of teachers who are well qualified,

knowledgeable and experienced to teach a curriculum suited to the age and ability range of their pupils. The school currently benefits from Government funding to reduce class sizes: the additional teacher is used to keep the infant classes small. This is having a positive impact on pupils' education. The number of learning support staff is adequate to meet the needs of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs or pupils who have associated behavioural problems. Classroom assistants develop very good relationships with pupils and contribute effectively to their learning through individual support. They are well prepared so that they know precisely how best to help pupils in lessons. The amount of time allocated for classroom support for children under the age of five is adequate and benefits particularly children who have special educational needs. There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection. Half the staff has changed, including the leadership and management of the school. Two newly qualified teachers were appointed last year, one in September and one in January. A number of long-term absences have contributed to unsettled patterns of learning in the upper classes of the school in the last year.

56 All members of staff participate in the appraisal process and job descriptions are in place. Training is planned in conjunction with the school development plan and the teacher appraisal process. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the induction of new members of staff and a good system is in place to support them in their first year of teaching. The non-teaching staff make a significant contribution to the teaching and learning of all pupils and especially those with special educational needs.

57 The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. It is in good structural order and decorative condition overall and provides a pleasant environment in which to learn. Class bases and shared areas are organised well and laid out in an effective manner with stimulating displays of pupils' work, books and artefacts. The environment is further enhanced by brightly painted windows and eye-catching displays of pupils' art in corridors. The care-taking and cleaning staff make a significant contribution to the cleanliness and care of the building ensuring a welcoming learning environment for pupils. The library is small, comfortable and well decorated. It is accessible to pupils and the use of library books is well planned to provide boxes of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms which are regularly renewed by class teachers. This encourages pupils to read and to find out information from books and aids their good progress. The school hall is used effectively for indoor physical education, with a satisfactory range of equipment. There is ample space on the site for outdoor games. Appropriate attention is paid to the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors. An additional room, funded by the local education authority, is used as an after school club for the community. Parents appreciate the small room set aside for their use while they are in school. Although the reception classroom opens on to a separate, paved area, this is not fenced and so has limited use as an outside play area for children under the age of five.

58 Overall resources for learning are adequate to fulfil the requirements of the curriculum. Provision for resources for the teaching of mathematics, English and science is good. The resources for learning and facilities for children under the age of five are limited. The school has an adequate supply of computers. Their use is developing to provide effective support in all subjects of the curriculum. Resources are organised efficiently and well looked after. These aspects have much improved since the last inspection.

## · **The efficiency of the school**

59 Financial planning is good. There is careful monitoring of expenditure within the budget, and the governing body takes its responsibilities seriously. The finance and staffing committee meets regularly to evaluate spending patterns. The headteacher submits a range of budgeting strategies, and final decisions are made after careful consideration of all alternatives. The local education authority provides very helpful guidance, and the long-term financial plan influences the decisions that are ultimately agreed.

60 Fluctuating pupil numbers create difficulties when planning the budget. Since June 1998, pupil numbers have fallen by 12 per cent, with a consequent reduction in funding. Nevertheless, the same number of teachers is required and this imposes pressure on other budget headings. The prudent approach of the headteacher and governors ensures that pupils are not disadvantaged. This is particularly important since a small deficit is forecast for the end of the current financial year because of falling rolls.

61 Funds for staff development are used wisely, and are assigned to meet the priorities outlined in the school's development plan. Informal meetings and discussion groups ensure that knowledge gained on courses is shared by all members of staff. Support for pupils with special educational needs is targeted wisely and is fully itemised.

62 Good use is made of teaching and support staff, resources and accommodation. Effective planning ensures that teachers' expertise is fully exploited. It is recognised that support staff play an important role in the school. Wherever possible, resources are stored centrally so that all staff can avail themselves of all available artefacts and sources. The library is a centrally located area but was used sparingly during the inspection.

63 The standards of financial control and school administration are good. The recommendations noted in the most recent financial audit have been acted upon, and the collation, handling and monitoring of day to day expenditure are efficient. Financial procedures reflect good practice. Administration procedures are clear and unobtrusive. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.

64 Pupils enter the school with standards of attainment and socio-economic circumstances that are well below average. They experience good teaching and most establish a satisfactory rate of progress in Key Stage 1, which is improved upon in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, standards of attainment at the end of both key stages remain below national averages. The cost of educating each pupil is similar to national norms. Taking all these judgements into consideration, the school provides good value for money.



## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

65 Children are taught in the reception class by a teacher, a part-time nursery nurse and a part-time teacher for special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, the nursery nurse was absent on long-term sick leave and replaced temporarily by a newly qualified nursery assistant. There are good induction procedures in place and home visits prior to children starting school help to make children feel confident. Children under the age of five make satisfactory progress overall. Their attainment improves though it is still well below the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development at the age of five. The great majority of children have had no pre-school education. Their attainment on entry to school is well below that expected of children of this age in all areas of learning.

66 In personal and social development, at the age of five, children attain standards well below those expected of their age, though they have made satisfactory progress since entering school. Children learn to follow instructions, however, they find remembering the sequence of them difficult without constant reminders. They sit docilely on the carpet, listening to their teacher and behave very well. In answer to questions, though, they tend to repeat what the teacher has said, often forgetting what has been said to them only minutes earlier. They begin to relate to adults in the class and a few relate to other children. Most children, however, play alongside each other. In role-play, for example, children put on hats and coats (some require assistance) and then declare 'My is policeman' and do not interact with the 'burglar' who similarly declares his status as 'I am men in black'. Most children need adult attention to help them complete tasks. They quickly become over-excited and find it hard to moderate their voices when playing 'Snap' with their teacher for instance whilst others work and play uncannily silently. Their co-operative and social skills are quite limited though they are willing to learn. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some good features. There are clear expectations of good behaviour and this helps to create a happy atmosphere, conducive to learning, where children feel valued. The beginnings of good working habits are established and teachers and support staff work well as a team. Interesting activities are set up for independent play. Children, however, are expected to behave with an unrealistic degree of maturity and to settle to working on formal tasks too soon. Opportunities are missed to develop personal and social skills through experiencing many different, short activities and through structured play suited to children who have had no pre-school education and whose social skills are limited.

67 In language and literacy, five-year-old children attain standards that are well below those expected of this age group. Children's progress is satisfactory. Most children have a limited vocabulary and many do not talk fluently. They find it quite difficult to have a conversation with an adult, or with other children, usually responding only when questioned or to echo their teacher's words. Their spoken language often omits prepositions and some do not know the names of common objects. Children enjoy listening to stories and are interested in the pictures, commenting, for example,



that the signpost might 'spin'. They know that print is read from left to right and quickly point out when their teacher reads backwards. They become increasingly interested in books. The few higher attaining children recognise that a full stop 'means you have to stop'. In response to their teacher's questioning, children's attainment seems much higher than it actually is as they respond to her tone of voice and supply the word she is looking for. Most are unable to recognise the letters of the alphabet with any consistency: although they recognise cursive and capital letters by sound most have great difficulty in identifying letters and words in books. Very few children can write their own names unaided and most cannot write independently. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have good strategies for teaching children how to read and through constant repetition seek to remind them of the details they quickly forget. The teacher skilfully interests children in spelling by accompanying words with her delightful drawings. This benefits the small number of higher attaining children. However, one third of the present class is only just four, and many of the activities are inappropriate for their age and stage of development.

68 In mathematics, children make satisfactory progress though the standards they attain are well below those expected of five-year-olds. Children are very unsure of simple mathematical language such as 'beside' and 'under'. They learn words such as circle and cube. They make a good attempt to draw round two-dimensional shapes though they find it very hard to keep the shape still and to hold the pencil against the edge. Most pupils count up to three objects accurately and know the sequence of numbers up to ten. Some children begin to understand the concept of taking away to make something smaller. Higher attaining pupils recognise that 'minus' means the same as 'take away' but they do not know how to count back. By the age of five they have mastered some number rhymes and songs and this is good progress for most children who do not know many such rhymes when they start school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most activities require adult support for children to complete their tasks; for example, adding the correct number of legs to a spider. Practical equipment is used well to show physical representation of number. Whilst the level of work challenges higher attaining children, many average and lower attaining children miss out on learning basic concepts and skills. Careful questioning and skilful language reinforcement extend children's mathematical vocabulary well.

69 Children's standards of attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world are well below those expected of five-year-olds. They make satisfactory progress and learn much to interest them about their world. About a quarter of the children do not know the colour of their eyes when they observe themselves in a mirror but they are almost certain that the 'colour won't change'. They know that the moon comes out at night but were very surprised that animals like cats and hedgehogs came out after dark. When learning about their senses, only ten per cent of children recognise that 'you feel something' to work out what it is. They know that the sand in their tray is 'cold' and 'wet' and many know that the sun will make it warm and dry. When squashing jelly cubes in water with their hands, they say isolated words such as 'slippy' and 'wiggly' to describe the sensation when asked. Children learn about growth and development by planting bulbs. The quality of teaching is good and the well chosen activities help children to learn about their world through play and physical sensation. The children's education benefits from the good use of resources and from the well-planned practical activities.

70 In physical development, children make satisfactory progress. Their attainment is well below the level expected of their age. Although some aspects of physical development are close to the levels expected of five-year-olds, their attainment is well below expected levels when handling tools requiring fine or delicate control. In physical education lessons in the hall, children use the space well, becoming aware of the needs of others. Many are adventurous in their use of the climbing frame and jump on and off the box with confidence and good control. Their levels of co-ordination improve as they learn to climb, balance and slide. Children enjoy building their own vehicles for creative play outside; one pair made a 'bus' so they could both sit on it together. Their handling of small tools such as scissors, pencils and glue is less secure. Lower attaining pupils have difficulty holding a pencil and many colour in very roughly, straying over the lines. Children learn to use scissors and glue safely and appropriately, well supervised by adults. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Physical education lessons are well planned to suit the children's stage of development though further experience through structured play activities is limited because of the very limited range of large-scale equipment such as wheeled vehicles.

71 In creative development, five-year-old children attain standards well below the level expected of their age and most need a lot of adult support. They explore texture through collage and enjoy squeezing out glitter glue into a 'nice big blob' to stick on different sized sequins. They are very patient when gluing and sticking. Their painted houses are lively and fill the page well though not all have recognisable doors and windows. When drawing a picture of a friend they add hair and features fairly randomly. Children learn songs and rhymes quite quickly which they sing with evident enjoyment as they perform the actions. Their class assembly was very good indeed as they proudly held up their work and remembered to say all their lines. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and children's work is both celebrated and valued. Activities are imaginatively planned and well organised and resources are used satisfactorily to foster children's creativity. Because many children lack very basic skills, they do not gain as much benefit from some of the activities as they might for they do not sample a wide enough range to enable them to gain confidence to create their own work.

72 Children work and play sensibly and co-operatively. They are keen to show what they can do and approach tasks, which they can complete successfully, with enthusiasm. When the work is too difficult for them, their attention wanders. Some sing happily to themselves as they trace over the letters of their name. They play contentedly on their own, lining up vehicles in a pretend car park, for example and enjoy the company of others though conversations are limited. Children have good attitudes towards learning and respond well to their teacher's enthusiasm.

73 Children under the age of five receive an unsatisfactory curriculum. Although it based on the nationally recommended areas of learning, the curriculum does not offer sufficient practical activities designed specifically to enrich children's spoken language and their personal and social development. The planning links carefully to the early stage of the National Curriculum and elements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are incorporated. The nursery nurse and teacher for special educational needs are fully involved so that their time is used most efficiently and effectively to help children to learn. The formal arrangement of the timetable restricts the range of activities which can be offered to children under the age of five. This affects the timing

of some activities and so the length of time the teacher spends with one group can be over long. The large shared area, set up for play activities and for special needs teaching, is used well. Teachers keep detailed assessments of what children know and can do and keep records of their attainment in accordance with the nationally agreed areas of learning. These, however, do not influence sufficiently well what children are taught.

74 The outdoor physical provision for children under the age of five is adequate. Although there is a separate play area, it is not fenced and so its use is restricted. The classroom is spacious and well equipped. Although children's work is attractively displayed, there is very little print to tempt them to read. The previous report incorporated the report on provision for Early Years with Key Stage 1 and so it is not possible to make a comparative judgement. Parents are made to feel very welcome and the school encourages regular informal contact through its weekly after school club for parents and children.

- **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

- **English**

75 Overall standards of attainment in English are below average. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the national average in English. The 1998 test results indicated that the number of pupils attaining Level 2 was close to the national average in reading, well below in writing and above the national average in speaking and listening compared to all schools. Performance over time in English indicates an improving trend which inspection evidence confirms. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the national average. In the 1998 tests for eleven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the level seen nationally and close to the level seen in similar schools. Results in 1999 show a continuation of the improving trend for pupils aged seven, and a dip in the performance of pupils aged eleven to very low in comparison with all schools and below the average attained in similar schools. This particular Year 6 group was affected by transience. In addition, changes in staffing interrupted teaching. This affected target setting as well as pupils' settled patterns of learning. Approximately one third of the pupils appear on the register of special educational need and require extra support through their individual education plans. One fifth of last year's Year 6 were excluded for behavioural reasons. Teacher assessments for both key stages are in line with test results. The comparative performance of boys and girls varies from year to year. During the inspection there were no discernible differences between the performance of boys and that of girls.

76 The school is well aware of the need to improve the levels of attainment, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2. There are good policies and schemes of work in place to enable teachers to implement the literacy hour successfully, and teachers have received the required training. Although tests have been analysed for scores and levels for different year groups of pupils, insufficient attention has been paid to the analysis of the content of the tests, in order to show areas of weakness in what pupils know and understand so that remedial action can be taken.

77 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Many pupils enter school with a low level of vocabulary, and their expressive language lacks structure. By the age of seven, most pupils listen with reasonable attention, concentration and understanding. Many pupils do not answer questions at length though and lack the confidence and vocabulary to express their ideas orally. Pupils read simple words accurately but only a small number read fluently. Their use of letter sounds when trying to read new words is limited and pupils generally do not use picture or contextual clues unless prompted to do so by an adult. Pupils' writing is below the average nationally as most write in very simple sentences. They understand that stories have a beginning, a middle and an end and begin to arrange sentences in a logical sequence. Standards in spelling are below average. Pupils learn to spell common words for tests but do not use them very accurately in their writing. Their handwriting is joined but not particularly neat and the letters are often uneven in size.

78 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the nationally expected level in reading and writing and close to the national average in speaking and listening. Pupils express themselves clearly in lessons and speak confidently. They are aware of the needs of the listener, adding detail and specialist vocabulary as necessary as when explaining that saying 'someone is a monkey' is 'a metaphor meaning he is mischievous and cheeky'. Pupils listen carefully in class and are ready to respond both to the teacher and to each other. Their reading is below average. Most pupils read accurately and with understanding though at a level below that expected nationally. Only higher attaining pupils are fluent and expressive. Pupils understand how to use and index and contents page and most can locate information quickly. Pupils' writing is below average because most pupils, including higher attaining pupils, do not write at sufficient length at an early enough age. They are able to write for a range of purposes in different styles. However, the vocabulary and sentence structures of just under half the present Year 6 pupils are limited. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 create well-structured and extended pieces of writing using a range of punctuation and paragraphs accurately. Their handwriting is untidy and letters are not particularly well formed in a fluent style.

79 Pupils make good progress at both key stages and very good progress in speaking and listening overall. They make good progress particularly at the beginning of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2; progress is satisfactory as they move from infants to juniors, consolidating what they know and understand. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.

80 Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening as they learn to listen more closely, give more appropriate answers to questions and become better able to articulate their thoughts more coherently. They learn to give objects names, and to speak in sentences. As their confidence grows, they learn to use language to explain their ideas and answer more complex questions. Older pupils develop these skills so they can present an argument, or explain their thinking. They give fuller answers, for example, to questions based on class novels, showing a willingness to discuss feelings and motives. Some pupils use technical language readily, describing personification and explaining where metaphor and simile occur. Most pupils make a sound start with reading. For some pupils, the opportunity to read to an adult regularly is unavailable. This slows their progress. They make good progress in developing their awareness

and understanding of letter sounds and learn to read many common words though they find it difficult to use these strategies without support from an adult. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils begin to read more confidently and some develop the ability to make inferences about characters and events. Pupils become familiar with a wider range of authors, particularly developing their knowledge of poets and poetry. Pupils make good progress in writing, learning how to plan what to write. In Year 2, pupils begin to write to a framework, and become aware that they must start their writing in an interesting way. In the early years of Key Stage 2, this good start is built on, with attention given to editing skills, various punctuation conventions and, in the final year of the key stage, building a narrative from a plan. Opportunities for pupils to make further progress through extended writing are more limited.

81 The quality of teaching is good overall and some very good and excellent lessons were observed at both key stages. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and their planning is very good throughout the school, enabling pupils to make good progress from their very low starting point at the age of five. Management of pupils is generally good and time and resources are well organised. Where class control is less good pupils become restless and lose concentration. Teachers assess pupils' learning carefully and give extra support where it is required. They make good use of the introductory sessions of the literacy hour to develop skills in speaking and listening as in an infant lesson where pupils volunteered to select a punctuation mark in the text and talk about it to the rest of the class. Teachers form very good relationships with pupils and encourage their independence. They make lessons interesting by choosing texts which are relevant to the pupils. In an excellent lesson, very skilful questioning not only enabled pupils to empathise with the plight of 'the baby owls who had lost their mummy' but to understand how the owls' different ages might affect the maturity of their response to the problem. When teaching pupils to distinguish the active from the passive voice, highly skilled use of actual minutes of a meeting gave a real sense of purpose to the exercise. Teachers make very effective use of adult volunteers to support pupils who have special educational needs.

82 The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy with energy and commitment, and detailed lesson planning is linked to the policies and objectives shown in medium-term plans. All the elements of the literacy strategy are included in lessons and group work is well organised. Occasionally activities do not match the abilities of pupils; for example, independent activities within the literacy hour are not sufficiently well planned in all classes to enable pupils to make progress through consolidation of what they know and understand. Literacy is promoted through most areas of the curriculum, and is given a high priority throughout the school. Pupils learn to use specialised vocabulary in science and geography, and write reports on what they learn in history. They learn to write in various styles by the end of Key Stage 2, and benefit from visits by writers and poets. These help to enrich pupils' enjoyment and awareness of literature.

83 Assessment and record keeping processes are satisfactory and reading records are kept in a detailed file. The home-school diary, in which reading is recorded, is good for it includes space for comments by both children and parents. Standardised tests are used and appropriate records kept. Planning documents contain helpful evaluations which indicate what needs to be done next and which pupils need particular work; in this way assessment is used well to influence what is taught.

Targets are set for individual pupils although these do not always address what is needed most. The good quality resources are well organised and are sufficient to meet the objectives of the curriculum. The collections of novels are used well as are the books of enlarged text. Some classes are rather short of dictionaries, and the libraries are well organised and adequately stocked.

84 Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced and policies and schemes of work have been reviewed and put in place. The use of information technology has been included in planning and word processing is developing well. Short-term planning is of good quality and objectives are shared with pupils. Much of what has been put in place in recent months indicates the school is extremely well placed to improve attainment in accordance with the school development plan.

### **Mathematics**

85 The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 showed that levels of attainment in mathematics were below the national average. However, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 or above was close to the national average. Girls performed significantly better than boys. Since 1996 results have improved consistently and this trend continued in 1999. Results are in line with attainment in schools of a similar type.

86 Data for Key Stage 2 in 1998 shows that the percentage of pupils who reached National Curriculum Level 4 or better was close to the national average, although the average level of attainment was well below national averages. In this year group boys performed slightly better than girls. Overall results matched those at schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. From 1996 until 1998 results improved every year. However, in 1999 there was a sharp dip and only 39 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or better compared with 55 per cent in 1998.

87 Inspection judgement is that attainment is below average and varies considerably from year to year. The high number of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups affects overall averages. In current year groups, attainment at the age of seven is well below expectations, and is below expected levels at the age of eleven. However, particularly strong teaching at the end of this key stage is leading to rapid progress for many pupils in their last year at the school.

88 By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can count sets reliably and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten. They recognise odd and even numbers and can place numbers in simple sequences. Higher attaining pupils identify simple two and three dimensional shapes and recognise right angles. They can talk about results they have recorded in block graphs. Despite the heavy emphasis on number work, many pupils are still insecure with mental addition and subtraction of single digit numbers. They often require counters and adult support to complete simple calculations.

89 Pupils start in Year 1 with very limited mathematical knowledge. They make satisfactory progress as a result of strong teaching and positive attitudes to their work though many find the work difficult and mathematical concepts hard to grasp. Pupils with special educational needs, who benefit from the extra support they receive in many lessons, make similar progress. There are no clear variations in rates of progress made by boys and girls. There is sound consolidation of number and most pupils are acquiring a range of mathematical language. This progress is underpinned by teachers' preparation of work matched to the needs of all groups of pupils and meticulous lesson planning.

90 Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, pupils know the four rules of number and use inverse operations to check their answers. Higher attaining pupils address number operation problems systematically and make effective use of their knowledge of place value. Most can convert decimals to simple fractions, and are able to calculate the area of compound shapes. Many are able to halve and double numbers up to 100 in their heads. Although they often use a range of methods when checking their answers, many still lack the confidence to develop their own strategies for solving problems. A significant number of pupils find it difficult to discuss their interpretation of data they have gathered.

91 Teaching is particularly strong at the beginning and end of Key Stage 2, and this helps to promote the good progress made by both boys and girls. The progress of pupils with special educational needs benefits from the specific numeracy targets contained in their individual plans. A genuine sense of discovery emerges in sessions when pupils are challenged to use and apply their developing number skills. Teachers use every opportunity to reinforce multiplication tables, which year 6 pupils chanted all the way to the swimming baths. Higher attaining pupils are refining their use of approximation and of calculators to verify their answers, and are beginning to discuss the results of their work authoritatively.

92 The promotion of numeracy is satisfactory in mathematics lessons. Teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy fully and it is beginning to have an impact on standards. Teachers seize the opportunity to promote numeracy into teaching of other subjects if the opportunity arises. However, there is no definitive structured approach to this, offering planned opportunities for reinforcement. The increased emphasis on mental skills is already having a positive impact on pupils' mathematical language and understanding. Plenary sessions are used effectively to assess and celebrate learning.

93 Pupils generally approach their numeracy lessons enthusiastically. They are keen to take part in discussions and to share their answers with the rest of the class. Many are prepared to ask questions to further their own understanding. They listen carefully and many pay great attention to accuracy. They generally work sensibly when required to work independently and co-operate well when working with a partner or in a group. They readily share their own ideas about how to solve a problem. In almost all classes, there are productive relationships between pupils and their teacher. For example, young pupils are entranced by a glove puppet, who checks his own answers and points out his own mistakes.

94 The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good, with a significant number of very good lessons at both key stages. Planning is very thorough and teachers prepare lessons which almost always provide work which challenges all pupils in the class. Occasionally, higher attaining pupils are not set work which is sufficiently well matched to their needs. In a very good lesson in Key Stage 1, creative play was used well, and pupils were given appropriate responsibility to experiment with numbers. The use of different levels of questions for different ability groups is particularly effective, since it guarantees involvement and extension work for all pupils. Three lessons out of every four in Key Stage 2 are extremely effective and promote pupils' understanding of mathematical principles as well as extending knowledge. They are characterised by brisk introduction, clear explanations and purposeful management of time. Lessons are sometimes geared towards the performance of the teacher, rather than the progress of the children.

95 Resources are very imaginative, from the number octopus in Year 3 to the plans for different sized rooms in a doll's house so pupils in Year 6 have a real purpose for calculating area. All teachers prepare extra challenges for pupils who have completed core activities in the lesson. Pupils are set a mathematical problem each day in Year 6 and put their solutions in a special box. This makes mathematics fun as well as purposeful. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in many lessons, since learning assistants know pupils' individual targets and focus on them effectively.

96 Strong teamwork is evident throughout the school. This has been harnessed by an enlightened co-ordinator who has promoted clear schemes of work and monitors teaching strategies effectively. Links between the key stages are good, and planning takes full account of the wide spread of attainment in most classes. Assessment strategies are comprehensive, and provide relevant information to help teachers adjust their planning. However, there is no formal analysis of national test results. All pupils are expected to complete a mathematical task at home each week.

97 Standards in lessons in Key Stage 1 are lower than those reported during the previous inspection, and are broadly the same in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, test results at the end of both key stages have improved significantly. The good overall progress that pupils make is allied to ambitious teaching and positive attitudes. There are clear indications that all pupils will continue to attain standards that reflect their potential.

## **Science**

98 Overall standards of attainment in science are below average. By the time pupils leave school, two thirds of pupils attain the national average with a small proportion attaining above this level. This is below the average expected nationally and similar to results attained in 1998. In the most recent 1999 test results, 58 per cent of pupils achieved the level expected of their age or better which was well below the national average and below average compared to similar schools. The 1999 teacher assessments of science indicate below average attainment for seven-year-olds. Inspection judgement confirms this. Taking the three years' results from 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance is well below the national average at Key Stage 2 though



standards show steady improvement. Inspection evidence is that pupils' attainment overall is below average at both key stages. There is no discernible difference between the attainment of boys and that of girls.

99 There are several reasons for below average attainment in science and for variations between the results of different year groups. Approximately one third of pupils has special educational needs in the present Year 6 class. The 1999 test results were affected by a similar proportion of pupils with special educational needs, one fifth of whom were excluded during the year for associated behavioural problems. The pattern of teaching in the upper juniors has been disrupted by long-term staff absence and changes in staffing which has affected older pupils and contributed to their low standards of attainment and an insecure knowledge base. Until this year, pupils have not followed a curriculum at Key Stage 1 which enabled pupils at Key Stage 2 to build on what they knew and could do. Pupils are not encouraged to write up their investigations, label diagrams, draw conclusions or tabulate results with any degree of consistency until Year 6. The new curriculum introduced this September, is much more tightly structured and ensures that topics are taught in greater detail as pupils grow older. Its impact, at the present time, though, is limited. There are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and these are used well to assess what pupils know and understand when planning the next lesson. Pupils' performance in the national standardised tests is analysed and targets in terms of future levels of attainment are set. However, pupils' areas of weakness in these tests are not analysed and so teachers are unaware of the effectiveness of their teaching.

100 By the age of seven, most pupils classify materials according to texture. Higher attaining pupils distinguish between man-made and natural materials and fill in a chart with words to describe familiar objects. Most pupils complete a worksheet with a prepared format to check their understanding of changing materials, answering questions as to whether it will bend, squash, stretch or twist. Pupils record information on a bar chart but do not understand how to interpret the results. Pupils' attainment is below average in terms of their recording skills though many show sound scientific understanding. Their handwriting is hard to read and they do not write at length; for example, higher attaining pupils' writing up of investigations tend to be one-word answers. By the age of eleven, higher and average attaining pupils write clear explanations of how to make muddy water clean using clearly labelled diagrams. They begin to apply their scientific knowledge to work out problems such as separating tiny pieces of iron from stones. Pupils know about micro-organisms and carry out an investigation on yeast to find out how they breathe and grow. Their dynamic posters graphically illustrate the dangers of disease. Much of the work and methods of recording are new to them. Most pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the importance of prediction and fair testing when carrying out an investigation to determine how the length of shadows alters in relation to distance from the light source and present their findings successfully in a graph.

101 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at both key stages. From a very low initial understanding of physical and natural processes they learn much to interest them through investigative science. Younger pupils discover through discussion and experimentation that metals have magnetic properties and that light comes from different sources. Year 2 pupils learn that germs are tiny and spread disease and in deciding whether cold or hot soapy water will be

more effective in killing germs offer plausible scientific reasons based on their knowledge. At Key Stage 2, the effect of the new curriculum and its impact on pupils' progress is already seen as pupils in Year 3 use a graph to show the length of shadows at different times of day. Progress is restricted, however, by the lack of labelled diagrams and unstructured explanations of investigations to test, for example, the waterproofing properties of fabrics. In Year 4, higher attaining pupils learn that the particles in a solid are "squashed up" and that "powders take the shape of the container" and flow "because they're in little bits". Pupils' investigations into how to turn solids into liquids show a developing awareness of the importance of accurate measurement and fair testing. The simple format pupils use in Year 5 to write up their investigations is effective and develops logical thinking as in pupils' demonstrations of how sounds "need space to vibrate". Pupils' oral responses indicate greater progress than appears in their written answers because of inconsistent methods and expectations of accurate recording.

102 Pupils have good attitudes to their work and most behave responsibly. They enjoy practical activities and find the work interesting. Younger pupils thoroughly enjoy finding out, for example, whether shiny objects will light up in the dark when a torch is shone on them. Older pupils work well in groups as they measure the height and length of shadows. Boys and girls collaborate well. They begin to take responsibility for recording the information by Year 6. Younger juniors, however, find it hard to record collaboratively when measuring the length of different feet or arms. Older pupils enjoy learning and using correct scientific language, explaining, for example, that they "found out that the shadow gets bigger the closer the opaque object is to the light".

103 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages and during the inspection some very good teaching was seen, particularly of the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good strategies for managing pupils and provide tasks which interest them. The work is suitably differentiated for the different attainment groups within the class. They have good methods for establishing class control and hold pupils' attention well by the skilful variation of pace and good use of resources. Where the quality of teaching is very good, pupils' independence is encouraged through carrying out and recording investigations systematically. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally satisfactory and their expectations of what pupils can achieve realistic rather than high. Not enough is expected of middle and average attaining pupils at an early enough age so that too many do not record accurately, neatly or in sufficient detail. Teachers do not assess sufficiently well the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Marking is very detailed for older pupils. Regular assessments linked to topics as part of the newly developed curriculum have yet to have an impact.

104 The subject is well led by a recently appointed co-ordinator who has instigated a number of changes, which are beginning to have an impact on progress. Since the last inspection, standards are more consistent and the pattern of improvement more assured, particularly at Key Stage 2. The resources for learning are good and are used well, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

## Information Technology

105 Information technology is taught as a separate subject throughout the school, and opportunities are given to practise the skills taught in lessons during the following week. This is a recent innovation, and although the scheme and policy are sound there has not been enough time for the good planning and teaching to have an impact on standards. These are below those seen nationally at both key stages.

106 At Key Stage 1, pupils write short sentences using a word processor. They know how to use drawing programs and how to open and run programs which enable them to practise basic skills. They understand how to move pictures across the screen using a 'mouse'. At Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to use highlighting, and find various ways of editing their work. They save and retrieve their work, printing it out when appropriate. They understand how to put information into databases and begin to use data handling programs. Their information and communications technology folders show that most pupils are developing sound skills in these areas.

107 From a very low starting point, pupils make good progress overall. They make satisfactory progress at Key stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Progress of younger pupils, however, is hampered by the lack of printers so they do not print out copies of their own work. Few opportunities are available for using the computer in other subjects, such as geography or science, and there are limited opportunities for modelling and control technology so that standards are low in these aspects. Plans are in place to address these areas, with funding already available to upgrade and network all the school machines. Provision has already been made for the school to be linked to the Internet.

108 Pupils are enthusiastic about using computers, and behave well during teaching sessions even where they are gathered round a single machine. They concentrate well and listen carefully to instructions. They support each other well when demonstrating procedures, pointing out what should be done. Pupils work well in pairs using the computer, taking turns to operate the controls and helping each other as required. Older pupils explain their work clearly and are confident about what they know.

109 Few lessons of direct teaching were seen during the inspection. In those lessons seen teaching was good. Teachers had clear objectives for what the pupils were to learn and set a series of challenges. In a Year 3 class pupils took it in turns to give instructions for deleting, saving or printing text. In a Year 4 class prompts were displayed over the computer to help pupils make the right choice of commands. In other classrooms computers were being used to make name labels for art work or to edit and print work on the Romans. The knowledge of teachers is sound, with several staff pursuing a diploma course with the University of Lancashire. They are confident in handling both hardware and software.

110 The computers available are used to good effect and are of reasonable quality. The range of software on offer is limited but planned expenditure will increase the provision considerably. The subject is well managed and targets are in place to improve attainment. Information technology has improved since the last inspection. Although attainment is still below nationally expected levels, progress has improved, and all

planning elements are in place to help raise standards. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident. Monitoring procedures are already operating to enable any deficiencies in provision or attainment to be addressed. The school is in a very good position to improve.

## · **Religious Education**

111 The local education authority's Agreed Syllabus is well taught and successfully provides pupils with an understanding of religions in the contemporary world. Pupils' attainment, by the age of eleven, is broadly in line with standards expected of eleven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection, which found pupils' attainment and progress to be better at Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress at both key stages and achieve standards comparable with those achieved in other schools.

112 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have some awareness of well-known Bible stories. Their discussions indicate an average level of attainment as they recall the details of Noah's Ark, for example, or use "jealous" in their summing up of the story of Jacob and the coat. Their written answers, however, are below expected standards, as there is no evidence of extended descriptions beyond a few simple sentences in which words are mis-spelt as in their accounts of Divali. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of Advent as a time of waiting and of the symbolism of the candles on the Advent ring to indicate "belonging" in a figurative rather than a literal sense. They learn about different rituals and ceremonies and their understanding of other faiths broadens to include Islam and Judaism. Pupils understand the concept of respect for other faiths and traditions.

113 Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, make good progress as they develop their understanding of other faiths. Through sensitively managed class discussion, pupils from the earliest age are encouraged to reflect on spiritual values common to all religions in order to understand the importance of faith. For example, in Year 1, pupils begin to define "goodness" as "sharing" or "being kind to others". In Year 3, pupils suggest that "God is in someone when they do something that is good for other people". When they read stories of Christian and Buddhist origin they learn to appreciate the values of friendship and the importance of this in different faiths. Through studying the lives of people such as Martin Luther King they become aware how a strong faith can change the lives and the future of many people. Older pupils discover that stories in the Bible relate to their own lives and begin to contemplate the significance of baptism. They learn of Jesus' life and teachings and the significance of different aspects of world religions.

114 Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are keen to discuss and to ask questions about matters which interest them, volunteering information about their own lives. They listen most attentively both to their teacher and to each other. Pupils are prepared to contribute openly because they know that other pupils and their teacher respect and value their views. Pupils' response to the subject is seen in some of their writing which is touchingly honest in its reflective nature as they consider people who have had a good influence on them, most citing their teachers. Older pupils' very

good rapport with their teachers is seen in the shared comments on their written work, when pupils reply to teachers' thoughtful observations. Pupils tend to work singly rather than in pairs or groups and some are slow to settle to their written tasks. Their written responses are brief and lack the insight that some pupils display in discussion.

115 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers are concerned to give pupils the relevant vocabulary so they can express their views more precisely. For instance, younger pupils learn to understand the terms "rejection" and "acceptance" in relation to the story of Joseph. Teachers' planning is good and different work is planned for the different attainment groups within the class. Much teaching is based on discussion and often links directly to the pupils' own experience as well as giving pupils religious knowledge. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils enable them to deal sensitively with issues as they arise. One very good feature of the teaching is teachers' ready understanding of pupils' need to grasp concepts through actions as well as words. In one lesson, for example, pupils listened in absolute stillness with their eyes closed as the teacher moved quietly round the room to understand the meaning of "presence". In another, pupils' understanding of ritual was clarified by the teacher's skilful use of drama. Religious education is used satisfactorily to benefit pupils' skills in literacy as they learn to read different texts, though it is less well used to benefit their writing.

116 The resources for learning are adequate; the range and quality of multicultural artefacts is more limited than the provision of books which is good. The newly appointed co-ordinator has a clear view of how the subject should develop, and is aware of limitations in resources. The school's capacity for improvement is very good.

## · Art

117 On entering the school, the wide range of art studied by pupils is immediately apparent in the attractive and thought-provoking displays. They study many different artists from different periods and from the earliest age they are encouraged to experiment with different forms and techniques. The standard of their art is generally above the standard expected nationally at both key stages. Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, make very good progress by the time they leave school. The findings of this inspection are similar to those reported previously.

118 From an early age, pupils learn to observe pattern, line and form and to use these in their own pictures. Very young pupils combine painted patterns of squares and triangles offset by colourful three-dimensional loops in response to looking at the work of Mondrian. By Year 2, pupils produce extremely effective wrapping paper, printed with bright splodges of colour to form the background to bold lines suggestive of the style of Paul Klee. Through expressing visual images in three dimensions, as in younger pupils' multi-coloured patterned models of elaborate snakes in a malleable material after Niki de Saint-Phalle, older pupils are well prepared to present a lively response to artists such as Rene Magritte. This is seen in their skilful use of distorted scale and perspective in their surrealist "boxes" to present ordinary images in an extraordinary and magical way. Pupils learn about art from different cultures and are skilled at distinguishing African from Indian patterns.

119 Pupils enjoy art and work with intense interest, paying careful attention to detailed work as when they use a viewfinder to examine Hogarth engravings to learn about his drawing and shading techniques. They understand quite complex processes quickly and work rapidly to produce startling facial images using close-banded straight and curved lines to suggest salient features. Pupils are proud of their work and are keen to explain preliminary processes, referring back to their sketchbooks to indicate their preparatory work. Pupils with special educational needs concentrate very well and are pleased with their successes, taking care, for example, to point out the hallmarks of work by Clarice Cliff. They enjoy challenging work and are generous in appreciation of other pupils' efforts.

120 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages and some very good lessons were observed during the inspection. Teachers throughout the school use materials imaginatively and encourage a lively interest in form and process. The planning is good and is clearly designed to develop pupils' artistic skills. Pupils with special educational needs are discreetly supported and those whose pencil skills are less finely developed have opportunities to use different media such as string and glue, for example, to achieve similar effects in a tactile way. Lessons proceed at a good pace and teachers ensure that pupils make good use of the available time by working quickly. Their good class control ensures that pupils behave responsibly when experimenting with different tools and media.

121 The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is concerned to develop art further. Current developments include designing specialist boxes containing different materials and techniques, such as collage, printing or weaving, to provide teaching ideas linked to the development of specific skills. The resources for art are good and are both accessible and well chosen. Art contributes with design and technology satisfactorily to developing skills in literacy when pupils make their own illustrated origami books in which they keep a secret diary. Opportunities are missed to make explicit the links between art and mathematics when exploring symmetrical patterns or qualities of shapes. The school's capacity for improvement is very good.

## **Design and Technology**

122 By the time pupils leave school, they attain standards in design and technology which are generally above those expected nationally. They make very good progress during their time at school as they gain experience using an increasingly wide range of tools and materials. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers now follow nationally produced planning which ensures pupils use and apply previous knowledge and skills and then evaluate their success.

123 Young pupils learn to reinforce their kites using rolled newspaper which they attach with sticky tape. Their papier mâché balloons have a variety of small "baskets" attached in various ways using string or tape. By Year 2, pupils learn how to design and make small, wheeled caravans. They evaluate each stage of the designing and making process, experimenting, for example, with different ways of joining the axle to the chassis, for example, by using rubber bands. They learn that some joins work more

effectively than others for a variety of reasons. Year 6 pupils discover how to design and make a pair of indoor slippers, designing a prototype for the sole as well as a paper pattern for the fabric pieces. Younger pupils' manipulative skills are very variable and some have great difficulty cutting curves or manoeuvring a needle. By Year 6, however, pupils' skills have developed sufficiently well for them to design a template and to sew using a variety of stitches such as chain or cross-stitch.

124 Pupils are proud of their work and excited and astonished at the results, as when younger pupils chalked round a coat pattern for "Joseph's Technicolour Dreamcoat". They enjoyed testing the fixings for joining materials, one group concluding that sewing was "the neatest and the strongest". Older pupils are delightfully impressed at their teachers' expertise and keen to emulate their example, amazed, for example, at how tricky it is to bind two felt pieces together using embroidery stitches. They work hard and behave well, eager to try out new techniques.

125 The quality of teaching is very good and teachers' planning shows that pupils experience a wide range of tools and materials. Teachers are very well organised and manage pupils well. Parent helpers and support staff are very well briefed with a clear instruction leaflet so that pupils receive very good quality support during lessons. Teachers of younger pupils give very clear and repeated instructions so that pupils use tools sensibly and safely. Attention is paid to ensuring that pupils know the words for tools such as staples or needles, correcting confusion between pins and needles. Teachers of older pupils use a mixture of demonstration and practical activities to help pupils to learn. Although work is used satisfactorily in design and technology to develop literacy skills, teachers miss opportunities to develop mathematical or scientific skills as in precise measurements or analysis of suitable materials and recording of results.

126 The resources for learning are good and are used well. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed and has contributed well to staff expertise in this subject and to the raising of standards overall since the last inspection. The school's capacity for improvement is very good.

## **Geography and History**

127 Most pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, make very good progress in geography and history and by the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards which are broadly similar to those achieved in most other schools. The school has maintained the standards reported on in the last inspection and improved on the quality of support offered to pupils with special educational needs. This has had a marked impact on the progress of all pupils and is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report.

128 At Key Stage 1, pupils learn how to use geographical terms correctly and begin to apply them to their knowledge of the local environment. Some pupils in Year 1 classified places seen on a local walk as 'near' or 'far' compared with places they might know in Preston such as the nearest MacDonald's. A Year 2 class understood the meaning of 'island', and knew that they lived on a large island called Great Britain.

They begin to draw comparisons between their own urban environment, living in a large housing estate, with rural or sea-bound environments. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils learn how rivers are formed and examine the stages they go through before reaching the sea. Pupils develop an understanding of the water cycle and the part this plays in forming geographical features. They then relate this knowledge to rivers of the world. They become familiar with countries and continents and use atlases to relate the two. Good use is made of the locality in studying urban geography.

129 In history, pupils are given practical experiences which help them to understand about the past, and are taught the subject specific vocabulary they need. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand that the way of life in the past was different to present times, and that the passage of time marks changes in relation to their own lives. In the infant classes, younger pupils look at their own lives so far and the main things that have happened to them. Older pupils in this key stage develop historical vocabulary and factual knowledge by studying famous figures such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils build on this foundation by looking at artefacts from the past and considering what can be learnt from them. They begin to empathise with people from history. Pupils use a variety of sources of information, sometimes searching the local library for material. In Year 3, pupils learn how to classify ways in which archaeology helps us to learn about ancient civilisations, commenting, for example, that 'we would find the ring and the necklace with the bones because they are metal and would not rot away'. In Year 6, they discover that these skills can be applied to learning about Ancient Greece as they begin to reason from given facts.

130 Pupils have good attitudes to their work at both key stages in both subjects. Pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically explained the practical work they had done on rainfall and the formation of a river. At Key Stage 1 pupils from a Year 2 class were entranced by the discovery that a yoghurt container was manufactured near their home, and were eager to find the marker for Preston on a map. Some older pupils go readily to books for information to enrich their knowledge. They work well together, supporting each other with spelling and reading where necessary. The pupils enjoy history, and like to discuss their work. They share and discuss ideas, listening to the teacher and to each other. They like finding information from various sources, and recognise that some things in history are open to interpretation and that some information is more useful than other. They use skills learned in literacy to present their work in a variety of styles, although their work is not often of any length.

131 Teaching of geography and history is good and sometimes better. Teachers are imaginative in preparing their lessons and engender enthusiasm in pupils. Teachers' planning is clear and relates to the long and medium term plans for the subject. Objectives for the subject are frequently shared with the pupils and re-visited at the end of the lesson. The pace is usually brisk, and the management of pupils, time and resources effective. Lessons link together to provide a cohesive picture of the topic, and skilful questioning leads pupils from what they already know into conjecture about the next area to be studied. In a Year 3 history lesson pupils who had previously studied Victorian artefacts were led to consider how different artefacts from an earlier civilisation might be discovered and evaluated. Pupils' learning is enhanced by educational visits to places of historical and geographical interest, and the local



environment is used well. The activities are carefully chosen; for example, a Year 4 class did a role play exercise to help them to understand why the Romans invaded Britain. Teachers use drama very well, for instance to involve pupils in 'an archaeological find'. This helps pupils to learn through experience.

132 Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. Geography is well managed and the new co-ordinator has a clear view of how the subject should develop. Links with science or numeracy are not made explicit. History is also well organised. The co-ordinator has clear targets for development of the subject and the monitoring of planning is good. The local education authority loan system provides good quality additional resources to supplement the school's. The school's capacity for improvement in both these areas is very good.

### **Music**

133 Progress in music is satisfactory overall, but varies considerably from class to class. Most teachers are non-specialists, and they generally employ strategies that do not require demonstration or personal accompaniment. When teachers' knowledge is secure, pupils' progress is much more marked.

134 In whole school assemblies, pupils sing together with reasonable enthusiasm. Attention to diction and pitch is satisfactory. Pupils who attend the weekly music club successfully undertake two part harmony and pupils in Year 6 can sing a round in two parts. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils add rhythmical accompaniment, including simple percussion, to their songs. Although this is effective, there is little evidence of creativity in this area. Opportunities to control and organise sounds made by instruments are limited, and consequently these skills are undeveloped. There is limited evidence of creative composition. Pupils' response to music varies according to the quality of the teaching they receive. Boys are sometimes reluctant participants. However, when the class teacher has the management skills to enthuse pupils, they begin to enjoy the activities and respond positively. For example, pupils in Year 3 performed 'Boom Chicka Boom' rhythmically, paying attention to tempo and dynamics. Concentration sometimes evaporates when teachers require pupils to analyse and interpret a performance.

135 The quality of teaching is variable, but satisfactory overall. Good lessons incorporate activities that build on previous knowledge and achievements and concentrate on technique. Secure planning helps those teachers who are tentative about their own performance skills. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers spend too much time establishing control and lesson planning has insufficient musical content at the right level.

136 Pupils participate in annual productions, and some have been involved in a project with the Hallé orchestra. Resources are barely adequate – the range of tuned percussion is limited and the range of untuned percussion lacks variety. The guitar club was disbanded recently, although a few pupils in Year 4 receive keyboard lessons after school. The co-ordinator monitors planning and has recently produced an outline scheme of work that has not yet been implemented throughout the school. There have

been few opportunities for non-specialists to develop their skills. The autonomy given to teachers to produce purposeful programmes has resulted in some interesting experiments. However, strategic planning as a whole lacks coherence. This weakness was identified in the last inspection and remains a matter of concern.

## Physical education

137 By the ages of seven and eleven, most pupils reach levels that are typical for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The sound levels of attainment reported in the last inspection have been maintained.

138 At Key Stage 1 pupils use space well and show a good awareness of others. They can control a ball in a variety of ways as they move around the hall. Close control with the feet is of variable quality. At Key Stage 2 no dance activities were observed. Early in the key stage pupils can pass and receive a ball with reasonable accuracy. However, some pupils in Year 5 misbehave when kicking a ball. Pupils are able to execute a range of balances with good body shape, but techniques for holding standard positions, such as headstands, are not generally understood. By the end of the key stage, many pupils show good control, particularly when constructing imaginative sequences. They exhibit variety in height and speed when using apparatus and concentrate on quality in their movement.

139 Pupils are almost always enthusiastic in lessons and co-operate well with one another. They respond well to instructions and try to analyse techniques when required to do so. All bring suitable clothing, and many younger children can dress themselves independently. Demonstrations for the rest of the class are undertaken confidently. In one lesson, some pupils lacked self-control and were prone to chatter as the teacher explained the next activity. This affected the progress of all pupils in that class.

140 Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers introduce a carefully sequenced range of activities and ensure that they know the correct techniques required. All lessons include a sensible session to warm up pupils' muscles before exercising. Encouragement and praise are strong features, and teachers pay due attention to all aspects of safety. One lesson lacked focus and the organisation was weak. As a result many pupils were unsure what they were required to do. Most teachers make good use of pupil demonstration to highlight good practice.

141 Teachers follow an outline programme of study, but there is no detailed scheme of work. This means that staff plan individually or in small teams but lack a consistent approach. The recently appointed co-ordinator is currently evaluating provision, and recognises the need to develop assessment strategies. Resources are satisfactory and large apparatus is in good condition. Several members of staff contribute to the wide range of extra curricular provision, covering all major games. All activities are open to both boys and girls. Pupils in Year 6 take part in a residential week which involves outdoor activities. The school's capacity for improvement is very good.

## *Swimming*

142 The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below.

143 In previous years, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were taught to swim. However, high costs have forced the school to restrict swimming lessons this year to pupils in Year 6. They are making good progress. Twenty-two pupils attended the swimming session which was observed. Nine pupils are in the 'advanced' group, eight in the 'improvers' and three are 'beginners.' All children, including beginners, are confident in the water. Advanced and improving swimmers can swim at least 25 metres. Most have good technique in the front crawl, and good progress is being achieved in back crawl. Pupils also practise successfully survival techniques appropriate to their ability.

144 Pupils at Ingol Community Primary School benefit from a structured swimming programme which leads to four levels of certification - learners, preliminary, merit and water safety. Their progress is assessed and local education authority certificates awarded when pupils successfully complete each stage. The class teacher and the swimming instructor, who is a qualified lifeguard, liaise effectively and are well supported by a non-teaching assistant. The quality of teaching is good and lessons follow an agreed scheme. The class teacher takes the 'advanced' group and supervises well-sequenced activities with clear explanations. The good teaching ensures that pupils in this group concentrate on swimming rhythmically and with attention to style. The qualified swimming instructor provides very good advice to both the class teacher and the non-teaching assistant who supervises the 'beginners' group. Lessons are tightly organised with an emphasis on style and stamina. The swimming instructor takes the 'improvers' group and clearly explains arm and leg action which pupils practise both in and out of the water. This ensures that pupils know the accepted techniques and are taught how to breathe efficiently. All safety aspects are followed meticulously. The survival activities are a regular feature in planning documents. Records of attendance and levels of competence are recorded regularly.

145 Pupils look forward to their swimming lessons and enjoy them enormously, responding positively to the realistic challenges presented to them. They participate eagerly and make sterling efforts to comply with all the instructions related to swimming technique. They benefit from the group and individual instruction they receive. The time spent on the coach travelling three miles to the swimming baths is used well as pupils recite multiplication tables on the way there and practise spellings on the way back.

## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

146 The school was inspected by a team of four inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector. In total, 63 lessons or parts of lessons were observed over a period of 14 inspector days. The full range of the curriculum was seen during the course of the inspection. Inspectors also observed pupils at the beginning and end of each school day, and during assemblies, break-times and lunch-times. They heard pupils read and scrutinised samples of their work. Discussions were held with pupils, the chair of governors, other members of the governing body, the headteacher and other staff. A range of documents supplied by the school was studied. The questionnaires returned by parents were analysed. Prior to the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the staff and the governing body. A meeting for parents held before the inspection was attended by thirteen parents.

### 147 DATA AND INDICATORS

#### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	212	6	61	95

#### Teachers and classes

##### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)  
Number of pupils per qualified teacher

9.6
22

##### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

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

5
80

Average class size:

26.5

## Financial data

Financial year:

1999

	£
Total Income	382,000
Total Expenditure	365,913
Expenditure per pupil	1,626
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,692
Balance carried forward to next year	35,779

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

140

Number of questionnaires returned:

47

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	45	47	6	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	45	51	2	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	45	23	9	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	40	49	6	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	36	53	9	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	43	47	9	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	49	47	4	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	40	49	2	4	4
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	38	45	13	4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	38	38	19	4	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	55	40	2	2	0