

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School
Blackburn

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique Reference Number: 119355

Headteacher: Mrs. K. Haworth

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. Thompson

Dates of inspection: 29th November – 3rd December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707523

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Newton Street Blackburn Lancashire BB1 1NE
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. T. Edwards
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Thompson <i>(Registered Inspector)</i>	English as an additional language Geography History	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Sarah Drake <i>(Lay Inspector)</i>		
Mary Farman <i>(Team Member)</i>	Under fives Mathematics Religious education	Special educational needs
Jozefa O'Hare <i>(Team Member)</i>	English Design and technology	
Gill Peet <i>(Team Member)</i>	Science Information technology	Equal opportunities
Jim Stirrup <i>(Team Member)</i>	Art Music Physical education	Curriculum and assessment The efficiency of the school

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages and in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is above national expectations;
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the first language, make good progress;
- Children under five in the nursery and reception classes make good progress;
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent both in class and around the school;
- The quality of relationships in the school is excellent;
- A very high proportion of teaching is good or better;
- The school is highly effective in providing support and guidance for its pupils;
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good;
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good;
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations.

This is a highly effective, improving school. It has very many significant strengths and very few weaknesses.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection has been good. Following the inspection, effective systems were put into place to identify and support pupils who were not fulfilling their potential. The procedures developed as a result of this key issue now form part of a wider, comprehensive range of monitoring systems which are constantly in use. Pupils are now more involved in setting targets for improvement and in monitoring their own progress. Good improvements have been made in the quality of experimental and investigative work carried out in mathematics and science. Improvements made in science have been so successful that the scheme of work now needs to be adjusted at the end of Key Stage 2 in order to extend the level of challenge presented by the work. Good improvements have also been made in the way in which teachers keep records of their pupils' progress. Current areas for development identified by the school are further improvements in assessment procedures in literacy and numeracy and an greater focus to be placed on work in science. The very good management systems that are in place and a strong underlying commitment to raising standards indicate that the school has a very good capacity for continuous improvement.

Standards in subjects

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
English	D	C	<i>average</i>	C
Mathematics	B	A	<i>below average</i>	D
Science	C	B	<i>well below average</i>	E

The information shows, for example, that while standards in science in 1999 were average, they were above

average when compared with those of schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Inspection findings indicate that, in mathematics and science, the standards achieved in 1999 have been maintained. However, in English standards are significantly better. The proportion of pupils likely to achieve or exceed the national target of Level 4, by the end of the school year, is above average. Attainment in information technology is currently below national expectations in Year 6; this is because, in previous years, pupils have not systematically developed their skills, knowledge and understanding in all elements of the subject. Improvements made by the school are beginning to take effect and younger pupils at Key Stage 2 are now attaining standards appropriate for their age. Attainment in religious education is above the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Attainment in art and design and technology is well above what is normally expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. In music and physical education, pupils are achieving standards above those expected for their age, while in geography and history standards achieved are appropriate for pupils in Year 6.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

Throughout the school, the majority of teaching is of good quality and is even better than at the time of the last inspection. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. More than 70 per cent of lessons were good or better, and over 21 per cent were very good. A small number were of the very highest quality.

In general, the most consistently good teaching is found in the classes for children under five and at Key Stage 1. In these classes, about three quarters of all lessons were good or better, while at Key Stage 2 about two thirds of all lessons were of this standard. The highest proportion of excellent teaching is found at Key Stage 1, where over nine per cent of lessons at this key stage were of the highest quality. These were in Year 1. Good teaching is a feature of English, mathematics, science, religious education and physical education at both key stages. In art, design and technology and geography the only lessons seen were at Key Stage 2 and these were of good quality. Music lessons at Key Stage 2 and history lessons at Key Stage 1 were also of good quality.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their lessons carefully and organise their classes well. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and use a good variety of teaching methods. They know their pupils well and match work carefully to pupils' abilities to provide achievable challenges in all subjects.

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	Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. However, a considerable number of pupils are taken on extended holidays during term time.
Ethos*	Excellent. Pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations and thrive within the school's caring environment.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides very clear direction for the work of the school. She is ably supported by her deputy, all staff and governors.
Curriculum	Good. It is broad and balanced and enables pupils to make good progress. The school provides a good range of extracurricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision for special educational needs is a significant strength of the school. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are very well supported in lessons and when withdrawn from classes for individual help.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school is very well staffed. Books and equipment are of good quality. The premises are well maintained, but some classrooms are rather cramped.
Value for money	The school continues to provide the excellent value for money reported at the time of the previous inspection.

**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

- II. Their children enjoy coming to school;
- III. All staff are approachable;
- IV. The school encourages parents to play an active part in their children's education;
- V. The school keeps parents well informed

What some parents are not happy about

- VI. There were no significant concerns

Inspectors' judgements support all the parents' positive views.

Almost half of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire. Just eight parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

There are no key issues resulting from this inspection because the need to raise attainment in information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 is currently being fully and successfully addressed by the school. However, the headteacher, staff and governors may wish to consider the following points for further development:

- VII. provide a more formal structure to schemes of work in some subjects;
(*Paragraphs 16, 44, 155, 199, 205*)
- VIII. share good practice more effectively to minimise the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between some classes within the same year groups;
(*Paragraphs 39, 77, 144, 145*)
- IX. review the marking policy and share good practice to minimise inconsistencies in the quality of marking between some teachers at Key Stage 2;
(*Paragraph 34*)
- X. further develop pupils' skills in investigative and experimental work in science at the end of Key Stage 2
(*Paragraphs 73, 152*)
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INTRODUCTION

· **Characteristics of the school**

- 1 St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School is situated in the Brookhouse ward, close to the town centre of Blackburn. The school was founded in 1865. New premises were opened in 1972 and further extended on four occasions since then. The school is much bigger than others of the same type, with 409 pupils on roll. In addition, 58 children have part time places in the nursery. The school serves an area of urban regeneration, which is both socially and culturally diverse. Almost 54 per cent of its pupils are from homes in which English is not the first language spoken. This proportion is high in comparison with most schools. The proportion of pupils from socially disadvantaged households is higher than average. Almost 30 per cent of them are eligible for free school meals. Over 25 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This is above the national average. Ten pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- 2 When children join the nursery their attainment is well below what is normally expected of three year olds. A significant number of these children have little experience of speaking English. Most of the children in the nursery transfer to one of the two reception classes at the start of the academic year in which their fifth birthday falls. Attainment on entry to the main school is below average. At the time of the inspection there were 60 full time children under five in the reception classes and a further 58 part time under fives in the nursery.
- 3 Current areas for improvement identified by the school are:
 - the further development of assessment in literacy and numeracy
 - an increased focus on science in response to the findings of a review of the subject.

· **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	25	29	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	24	22	24
At NC Level 2 or	Girls	27	27	27
Above	Total	51	49	51
Percentage at NC	School	94(86)	91(88)	94(86)
Level 2 or above	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	22	23	25
At NC Level 2 or	Girls	26	27	27
above	Total	48	50	52
Percentage at NC	School	89(84)	93(86)	96(98)
Level 2 or above	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

1 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2

For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	27	26	53

1	National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	18	19
		Girls	20	22	23
		Total	34	40	42
	Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	64(47)	75(67)	79(63)
		National	70(65)	69(58)	78(69)

1	Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	14	13
		Girls	20	18	21
		Total	33	32	34
	Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	62(65)	60(65)	64(71)
		National	68(65)	69(65)	75(71)

1 Attendance

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

Authorised	School	%
Absence	National comparative data	7.8
Unauthorised	School	5.7
Absence	National comparative data	0.1
		0.5

1 Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

1 Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

Very good or better	%
Satisfactory or better	26
	100
Less than satisfactory	0

2

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

1 **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

1 **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

1 **Attainment and progress**

- 2 Results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the proportion of eleven year olds achieving the national target of Level 4 was below the national average in English, close to the national average in science and above the national average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 followed a similar pattern, but with attainment well above average in mathematics. When results are compared with those of similar schools, with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards in 1999 were average in English, above average in science and well above average in mathematics.
- 3 When statistics from the previous three years are compared, standards in English are at a level close to those achieved in 1996 and 1997 following a dip in performance in 1998. In mathematics the trend is of steady improvement year on year from a position in 1996 when attainment was below average. In science standards fell to well below the national average in 1997, but have steadily risen since then.
- 4 National test results at the end of Key Stage 1 show that in 1999 the proportion of seven year olds achieving the national target of Level 2 in reading was well above average. In writing and in mathematics, the proportion achieving the national standard was above average. At the higher Level 3 the pattern changes. The proportion of pupils achieving this higher level was well above average in reading, close to the national average in mathematics but well below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards in 1999 for pupils achieving Level 2 were very high in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. In science, results based on teachers' assessments show that the proportion of pupils achieving both Level 2 and the higher Level 3 was above average.
- 5 Over time, standards in English overall have remained above the national average and in mathematics have been at or above the national average since 1996. In science the 1999 results are similar to those achieved in 1998.
- 6 Inspection findings show that in Year 6, the proportion of pupils in line to achieve the nationally expected Level 4 by the end of the academic year is above average in English and mathematics. In English, this represents a significant improvement on the results of the 1999 national tests and is due to the significant year on year differences between the groups of pupils compared. In science the proportion of pupils currently in line to achieve the nationally expected level is broadly average. However, the school is confident that this proportion will rise before the end of the academic year. In information technology, attainment is below national expectations. This is because, in previous years, pupils currently in Year 6 have not been able to develop their skills in all elements of the subject in a systematic way because of inadequacies in hardware and software. In religious education, pupils are on course to exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of the school year. Attainment in art and design and technology is well above what is normally expected of pupils in Year 6 at this point in the school year. Attainment in music and physical education, including swimming, is above average and attainment in geography and history is broadly average.
- 7 At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In information technology, improvements made in recent years have taken effect and attainment is broadly in line with what is expected nationally. In religious education, attainment is above the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. In all other subjects except geography, where standards are average, attainment is above what is normally expected of pupils in Year 2 at this

point in the school year.

- 8 Many children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below what is normally expected of children of a similar age. A significant number of these children have little experience of speaking English. Although children make good progress in the nursery, assessments carried out when they join the reception classes show that less than a third achieve scores that are average or above in speaking and listening, writing or number. This indicates that attainment on entry to the reception classes is below average. Children continue to make good progress in reception and by the time they reach statutory school age most of them achieve the expected levels in all areas of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 9 Children under five make good progress in acquiring skills in language and literacy because of the high priority given to language development throughout all areas of the early years' curriculum. In the nursery, activities such as story telling make a significant contribution to children's emerging speaking and listening skills and help them to develop an appreciation of good stories. Children learn how to handle books and most appreciate that text conveys meaning. Early reading skills continue to develop well in the reception classes and by the time they are of statutory school age, some children are able to read simple sentences. In the nursery children learn how to hold and use pencils correctly and by the time they are in reception many are prepared to write in their own way in role play and other activities. Good use of praise and encouragement results in children considering themselves to be writers and not being reluctant to attempt simple text. Mathematical skills develop from an early age in the nursery as children become familiar with simple mathematical language through games, number rhymes and stories. By the time children are in reception, many can successfully complete simple sorting and matching tasks. Most recognise and can order numbers up to ten, and some go further.
- 10 At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress as they build on the firm foundations of their experiences as under fives. Overall, pupils make the best progress in Year 1 as a direct result of the quality of teaching they receive, particularly in literacy. Good progress is made in developing skills in speaking and listening as pupils are encouraged to follow directions and respond to questions. Teachers' care in speaking very precisely makes a significant difference to pupils' understanding and to their progress. This is particularly the case for pupils with an emerging knowledge of English. Pupils are given opportunities to read aloud or speak to the class, and this helps their confidence in using their growing vocabulary. As their sight vocabulary develops, pupils begin to use a number of strategies to work out unfamiliar words when reading. The strong emphasis that is placed on reading during the literacy hour helps pupils to make good progress in acquiring reading skills. Pupils increasingly transfer their reading skills into their written work and make good progress. The accuracy of spelling gradually increases as pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and their sight vocabulary improve. Handwriting skills develop from an early age and pupils improve their skills in producing legible, joined script, with letters formed correctly.
- 11 The newly introduced National Numeracy Strategy is providing a secure framework within which pupils make good progress in developing their skills in mathematics. Teachers make good use of equipment such as number cards and counting apparatus to enhance pupils' ability in ordering numbers; they then build on this knowledge when introducing the concept of place value. Through regular mental arithmetic activities, pupils begin to develop skills in manipulating numbers. Pupils learn to identify an increasing number of two and three dimensional shapes and develop the mathematical vocabulary to describe their properties. Good scientific habits are encouraged from an early age. Teachers try to ensure that the work they plan is interesting and builds on pupils' natural curiosity about their environment. Pupils develop good skills in prediction and try to draw simple conclusions from their observations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing skills in information technology. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils are already confident in using computers. They gradually develop competence in activities such as carrying out simple research and controlling the movements of

programmable toys.

- 12 At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress overall. The best progress at this key stage is made in Years 5 and 6. Good progress is made in developing skills in speaking and listening. A particularly good feature at this key stage is pupils' increasing use of the correct technical language in a number of subjects. By the time they reach Year 6 most are able to converse with clarity and confidence. In reading pupils develop a good knowledge of a widening range of authors and increasingly read with fluency and expression. Research skills develop well, and pupils have good opportunities to use them in a range of subjects, particularly history. Good progress is made in writing. Through their guided and shared writing sessions, pupils acquire good writing skills, which they are beginning to transfer successfully to other subjects. Their progress is accelerated through good teaching and the efficient support that they receive from assistants in all classes. Following a close analysis of National Curriculum test results the school has successfully introduced lessons in which pupils are given planned opportunities to practise, consolidate and extend their newly writing skills. Good opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in writing for different purposes are provided in subjects such as religious education and history.
- 13 Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress in developing skills in numeracy. They develop greater competence in manipulating numbers and practise these skills effectively in subjects such as geography and science. All pupils make good progress in their ability to use and apply their skills in mathematics; this represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Similar improvements have been made in pupils' skills in experimental work in science. Pupils now make good progress in this aspect of science. By the time they reach Year 5 pupils can plan their own investigations and can think of different ways to record their findings. As the move through the key stage pupils show an increasing ability to interpret findings and to draw sensible conclusions from their work. Throughout the key stage, progress in information technology is satisfactory. This is due to the increased focus now given to information technology following the implementation of a new scheme of work and an increase in the number of computers available for pupils. Those pupils currently in Year 6 are making satisfactory progress but have not yet had the necessary range of experiences to enable them to attain the standards expected of them.
- 14 Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in the 'foundation subjects' of design and technology, history, art, music and physical education. Progress is satisfactory in geography. At Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress in design and technology, and good progress in all other foundation subjects except history and geography, where progress is satisfactory. The very good progress in design and technology is due to the combination of high quality teaching and a well structured scheme of work. There is a potential for even better progress in some foundation subjects, such as geography. Progress is inhibited to some extent where schemes of work lack clear, recorded guidance for teachers in the step by step development of pupils' skills and need to rely solely on the coordinator to provide this information to teachers. Pupils make good progress in religious education at both key stages.
- 15 In the under fives and at both key stages, pupils with special needs make good progress towards their personal targets, particularly when receiving additional support in class or when withdrawn from lessons. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Each year almost one in ten of pupils on the special needs register are removed from the register because of the progress that they have made.
- 16 Statistical evidence from national tests indicates that there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2 girls tend to do slightly better than boys. During the period of inspection, from the scrutiny of pupils' work and from observations in classes, there was little evidence to suggest uneven attainment. There is however some evidence to suggest that, for lower attaining pupils, there is a difference in performance by ethnicity. A scrutiny of

the special needs register shows that while 54 per cent of pupils at the school are of Asian heritage, they only account for 32 per cent of pupils on the register.

- 17 Pupils from homes in which English is not the first language spoken make good progress overall. In the nursery, reception and Year 1 classes they make rapid progress in acquiring skills in English because of the good quality of support provided by the bilingual assistants and the support teacher and also because of teachers' skills in taking great care over the clarity of their speech. Older pupils build successfully on these good foundations and by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2 their needs largely centre around the enrichment of their vocabulary.
- 19 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
- 18 Pupils show very good personal development and attitudes towards learning, and display excellent behaviour and relationships both with other pupils and with adults. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' positive attitudes and relationships are a strength of the school, which operates as a friendly, orderly, quiet and happy place of learning in which everyone feels cherished and of value. This atmosphere of confidence and consideration for others has a very positive impact on pupils' progress and standards of attainment.
- 19 Once they enter the nursery, children quickly adapt to routines and grow in confidence. In the nursery and reception classes they quickly develop good attitudes to learning. They enjoy their work and concentrate for considerable lengths of time. They behave well and relate well to each other and to adults. As they move from the nursery to the reception classes children become more enthusiastic and eager learners. They quickly develop the ability to enquire and are curious about how things are made. Children are sensitive to the feelings of others and respect each other's work.
- 20 Pupils throughout the school build on this good start, settling very well at the beginning of sessions, showing keen interest in what teachers have to say and readily offering ideas and opinions. They are very good about not calling out their answers, and also patient and attentive when others are speaking. Pupils listen very well to teachers' questions and instructions. When moving from one activity to another, for instance from whole class work to group work in literacy lessons, they do so without fuss, settling immediately to the work in hand. They concentrate well and generally persevere when they find work difficult, understanding that in this way they will learn more. From an early age pupils sensibly choose the right tools to do a given job and treat resources with respect. They are proud of their work, take care with its presentation, and are eager to talk about it. For the great majority of the time, the overwhelming majority of pupils participate fully in their lessons. Good examples of this were observed in Years 3 and 6. In a Year 3 English lesson in which pupils read through a play about 'The Golden Goose', pupils concentrated hard on the script so that they could come in with their reading on time. They shared parts amicably, listened carefully to each other's reading and undertook their roles enthusiastically. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils quickly identified square numbers in a sequence, showed high levels of concentration, motivation and enthusiasm to learn, were excited throughout the whole class investigation and persevered to finish within the set time limit.
- 21 Pupils with special needs display very good attitudes to their work. They apply themselves enthusiastically and concentrate well throughout lessons. They are well integrated into class and group activities and enjoy excellent relationships with teachers and other pupils. For example, pupils in one of the Year 2 classes were particularly pleased when one of the lower attaining pupils gave the correct answer during an English lesson. All pupils with special needs, including those identified as having behavioural difficulties, accept the school rules and respond positively to teachers' good management of them.

- 22 Pupils' consistently good behaviour and positive relationships are outstanding. In lessons, assemblies, during break times and outside the school, for instance when going to the swimming baths, they are open, polite, trustworthy and sensible. They also enjoy themselves. There has been no need to exclude any pupil in recent years and very little need to record or monitor incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils think about the effect of their actions on others and behave accordingly; they take collective responsibility for the behaviour of their class and their school. Pupils of different ages, ethnicity and abilities work and play together in harmony. They pay great regard to others' values and beliefs and maintain an excellent balance between respect for, and friendliness with, staff. Pupils cooperate well and are very helpful towards each other, for instance by explaining how to do a particular task but not interfering in carrying it out, or by discreetly taking a disabled pupil's chair from the hall back to the classroom. When soaked by a sudden heavy downpour at lunchtime, pupils were amazed and delighted by the surprise; there were no moans about getting wet, and they entered the school and settled down without fuss.
- 23 Pupils grow in confidence and maturity while at the school, developing into pleasant, self possessed young people who are fully ready to move on to the next phase of education, and to contribute to the community. They are tolerant, accepting of life's ups and downs and very willing to reflect on and talk about their feelings and beliefs. Even in the reception classes, pupils are prepared to volunteer their positive thoughts about others in the class, and those who are being spoken about can listen to the compliments without embarrassment. All pupils willingly take on responsibilities appropriate to their age, for example Year 6 pupils help to look after the office during the lunch break. Pupils' mature attitudes to life are exemplified by the writing of a Year 5 pupil, reproduced in the school's biannual newsletter, *'Netball club is exciting whether we win, draw or lose. Our teacher keeps us cheerful when we lose even though we feel a bit sad.'*

25 **Attendance**

- 24 Overall levels of pupils' attendance at school are satisfactory, although they are slightly below the national average. The great majority of pupils attend regularly and punctually, but the overall figures are adversely affected by the number of pupils who are taken on extended holidays to their family's country of origin. In the most recent academic year, ten per cent of pupils took extended holidays that together accounted for more than one thousand days' absence from school, around two per cent of possible time during the year. The school is currently monitoring the effect this has on pupils' rate of progress. The generally good level of most pupils' attendance contributes positively to their levels of attainment, since it helps them to make steady, uninterrupted progress in their learning.

26 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

26 **Teaching**

- 25 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- 26 The report of the previous inspection noted that *'there is an exceptionally high proportion of good to very good teaching and very little of the teaching has any shortcomings'*. Standards of teaching have now improved further. Seventy per cent of lessons were good or better and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Over 21 per cent of lessons were very good and over four per cent were excellent.
- 27 In general, the most consistently good teaching is found in the classes for children under five and at Key Stage 1. In these classes, about three quarters of all lessons were good or better, while at Key Stage 2

about two thirds of all lessons were of this standard. The highest proportion of excellent teaching is found in Key Stage 1, where almost one tenth of lessons were of the highest quality. These were in Year 1. Good teaching is a feature of English, mathematics, science, religious education and physical education at both key stages. In art, design and technology and geography, the way in which the timetable was arranged meant that no lessons could be observed at Key Stage 1. However, the quality of teaching in all of these subjects is good at Key Stage 2. In music, good teaching is a feature of Key Stage 2 while at Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory. In history, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. In information technology, teaching is satisfactory at both key stages.

- 28 Teachers of children under five have a secure understanding of the needs of young children and provide a good range of interesting and challenging activities. Lessons are planned well and resources are very well prepared. A very good working partnership exists between teachers and their nursery nurses and classroom assistants. Expectations of children's behaviour and achievements are high. A very good emphasis is placed on developing children's independence through the security of well established class routines and the effective use of praise and encouragement. Activities are well judged in terms of the level of challenge presented to children and also in terms of the time allocated for their completion, as a consequence the pace of learning is most often good. A particularly good feature of teaching in the under fives is the teachers' precision in their use of language. This is important, given the high proportion of children who start school with little experience of speaking English.
- 29 In general, teachers in both key stages have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach. Where teachers are less secure, good collaborative planning between teachers in the same year group and between year groups ensures that expertise is shared. Good subject knowledge is evident in the quality and clarity of teachers' explanations, in their enthusiasm for their work and in their questioning. For example, in a Year 5 geography lesson the teacher skilfully guided the class through some challenging work on map reading and on the use of map symbols. She explained clearly and then checked pupils' understanding through involving them in a whole class exercise to place correct symbols on a map before allowing them to work by themselves.
- 30 Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers make effective links with what pupils have previously learned and make progressive demands on them. The identification of learning objectives for pupils at the beginning of lessons is a particularly good feature, although this does not occur consistently in all classes. Where teachers do spend a short time at the beginning of lessons in explaining clearly what learning is expected, pupils are more focussed on their work and make the best progress. Progress is further improved when teachers return to their original learning objectives during the important period at the end of lessons when learning is reviewed.
- 31 Teachers use a good range of methods and class organisation, as appropriate for the subject being taught. A particularly good example of the success of appropriate class organisation was evident in a Year 3 history lesson about life in Ancient Egypt. Pupils were well organised and given clearly defined areas for research. This good quality organisation contributed strongly to the way in which pupils remained focused on their tasks throughout a very long lesson period. Methods such as the use of role play are also highly effective when used in the correct context. For example, teachers in Year 1 dressed as Florence Nightingale for the period of review at the end of their lessons. The device was highly effective in helping them to assess what pupils had learned, since pupils needed to base their questions to 'Florence' on what they already knew.
- 32 The quality and use of day to day assessment of pupils is very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. In general, work is marked with pupils at Key Stage 1 and a useful dialogue takes place in which suggestions for further improvement are made. At Key Stage 2, the increased amount of recorded work produced means that this is not always possible. Teachers at this key stage are sometimes

inconsistent in the way in which they mark pupils' work. While most work often contains encouraging comments and targets for improvement, some contains limited information as to how work can be improved. To some extent this is due to the fact that the school marking policy provides little guidance to teachers in criteria for marking and marking procedures.

- 33 Work is generally well matched to pupils' abilities. In some classes, teachers are particularly skilled in providing carefully adapted worksheets. At first glance these appear to be the same, yet they are subtly different in their content. Since they are based around the same task or use the same basic information, all pupils are able to take a full part in the review of learning at the end of the lesson, regardless of ability.
- 34 Homework is generally well used to support learning in school. In Year 6 teachers increase the frequency and quantity of work set. This prepares pupils adequately for the demands of Key Stage 3.
- 35 Pupils identified as having special educational needs are well taught in class or individually when withdrawn from lessons. Teachers are fully aware of the special needs of their pupils and plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities and provide achievable challenges. Teachers' expectations of the work rate and behaviour of special needs pupils is as high as for all other pupils and as a result these pupils make good progress. Pupils' individual education plans are well used to ensure that pupils work towards appropriate targets. Good use is made of support staff during lessons and there is good liaison between all staff who work with these pupils. Information technology is generally well used to support pupils with special needs.
- 36 Bilingual classroom assistants provide good quality support in the nursery, reception and Year 1 for pupils from homes in which English is not the first language. They work closely with targeted pupils to ensure that they understand fully what is required of them and ensure that these pupils enjoy full access to the curriculum. The precision of teachers' spoken language in the nursery, reception and Year 1 is also an important factor in the rapid acquisition of skills in English by these pupils. A support teacher, funded by the local authority, provides useful support for pupils and teachers at Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2. She supports teachers in their planning and in the delivery of their lessons and works with pupils in class. By the time these pupils are at Key Stage 2, the specific help that she provides focuses largely on developing vocabulary so that pupils are able to work on a level above that of mere literal interpretation of the spoken word or of text.
- 37 While no lessons were unsatisfactory, there are significant differences in the quality of teaching in some subjects and in the quality of the learning environment created by the teachers in some classes for younger pupils at Key Stage 2. This results in some inequality of opportunity for pupils in parallel classes that cannot be addressed solely through collaborative planning.

39

39 **The curriculum and assessment**

38 The school's curriculum and its provision for the assessment of pupils are both good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements and reflects the aims and objectives of the school.

39 The curriculum for children under five is good. Children in the nursery and reception classes are well prepared for compulsory education at the age of five. Curriculum planning is clearly linked to the nationally recommended Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. It is of a consistently good standard, and teachers are clear about their aims for individual lessons and their aims over time.

40 The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced and covers all areas of the National Curriculum and religious education. The timetable provides a good balance in time for all core and foundation subjects. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares pupils well for the next stage of education. The governors have a suitable policy for sex and drugs education, which is delivered where teachers deem it to be relevant. All pupils in Year 6 are involved in a 'Growing-up Week'. Issues relating to sex and drugs education are addressed during this project.

41 The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum, and to extra curricular activities. The planned provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, with all pupils having relevant individual educational plans, which match and meet their needs. Individual education plans are of very high quality; they are precise, set in manageable and achievable steps and based on careful analysis of individual needs. They form good working documents whereby pupils' progress is carefully assessed, recorded and duly reported. The specific curricular needs of pupils with English as an additional language are properly met. The specific needs of these pupils are carefully recorded using a proforma similar to that of an individual education plan so that appropriate provision can be made for them.

42 The step by step development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics, design technology and religious education is clearly mapped out, but is less clear in science and all other foundation subjects. This potential difficulty is overcome by the successful support and good advice provided to teachers by subject coordinators, and the good lines of communication which exist within the school. With the exception of the core subjects, the schemes of work for all foundation subjects, such as geography and history, are generally made up of detailed medium term plans devised by the teachers. They generally lack a clear, recorded framework of the development of pupils' skills against which teachers can compare their plans. This information is currently provided verbally by the coordinators. Curriculum plans are closely linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study and, over time, cover all required elements. Whilst there are some small inconsistencies, in the majority of cases teachers' planning takes account of the range of abilities within individual classes. The school curriculum is predominantly subject based, yet allows for some imaginative topic and cross curricular work across a number of subjects.

43 The school has modified the curriculum to take account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The literacy strategy has been very effectively implemented and its success is evident in the improved standards at both key stages. The numeracy strategy, in accordance with recommendations, has only been in place since the beginning of the academic year and is being effectively implemented.

44 The school provided a good range of extra curricular activities, both sporting and artistic. These include a football club, attended by about 30 pupils, a gym club enjoyed by 15 pupils and a netball club, regularly attended by 20 pupils. A singing group, a recorder group and the science club each cater for

about 15 pupils. Clubs for activities as diverse as computing, pottery and gardening are enjoyed by between 8 and 12 pupils. During the summer term, a sporting focus is placed on rounders, cricket and athletics, with extra-curricular activities provided for 30 to 35 pupils. Throughout the school, all pupils are provided with the opportunity to take part in a range of visits to support the curriculum, and for older pupils these include a residential visit. All these contribute to pupils' access to an enriched curriculum.

- 45 Assessment of the under fives is good. The schools' own assessments of children on entry to the nursery and the 'baseline assessments' administered when children join the reception classes enable teachers to match work to the needs of the children and track progress through the six recommended areas of learning. Teachers use good formal and informal procedures to assess pupils on a day to day basis and have a clear understanding of pupils' progress. Assessment results also influence the way in which pupils are grouped at Key Stage 1 and are used to target pupils for additional support.
- 46 The issue of inconsistency in assessment and recording procedures referred to in the previous report has now been successfully addressed and the school now uses an extensive range of procedures at both key stages. Very good assessment and recording procedures exist for core subjects with assessment and recording in some of the foundation subjects being somewhat less formal. A very good range of 'Quality Assurance' files underpins teachers' assessments. These files contain annotated, up to date examples of pupils' assessed work in all subjects. These are easily accessible to teachers and serve as a useful reference point when judgements are made about pupils' attainment. Pupils are involved in self assessment; they set their own targets for improvement and monitor their own progress through their individual 'Records of Achievement'.
- 47 Teacher's plans clearly indicate those pupils who have met their planned targets, those who have not, and planned changes in future activities.
- 48 All pupils have a literacy and numeracy file and a 'Pupil Profile'. This contains copies of annual reports to parents together with information about social and personal development. It also contains assessment information, including end of key stage National Curriculum test results and, where necessary, details of individual education plans for pupils identified as having special educational needs or those pupils specifically targeted for support where English is not their first language. All pupils also have an extensive 'Record of Achievement' file containing examples of work in all subjects, which are added to as pupils move through the school.
- 50 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
- 49 As at the time of the previous inspection, the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its aims clearly set out its determination to be a positive force in pupils' lives. In practice, staff act as very good role models, demonstrating to pupils, through their everyday actions, how best to treat others and oneself in order to both benefit from and contribute to the life of the community.
- 50 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Most aspects of school life make very positive contributions towards pupils' spiritual growth. The programme for acts of collective worship is thoughtfully planned, and provides opportunities for pupils to learn about principles, values and beliefs from Christian stories and from other religions. Those seen during inspection were highly relevant to pupils' own experiences and encouraged them to reflect on their own behaviour and expectations. Religious education lessons also provide pupils with much to think about. For instance, Year 1 pupils were skilfully brought to an understanding that often the best presents are not bought but are provided by one's giving of time and helpful actions. Year 5 pupils considered the story of the nativity in relation to

the plight of refugees today while in Year 4, pupils thought about the sacrifice made by a young child in the story of 'Dogger'. Teachers make great efforts to create a relevant, thoughtful atmosphere in lessons and in the activities they plan for pupils. For example, when changing activities from numeracy to English, Year 1 pupils were encouraged to stop and close their eyes for a moment to clear their minds and prepare themselves for the following session. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils learned to respond to the beauty of expression, language and suitability of phrases when studying the poem 'Earth and Beyond'. The work that pupils are asked to produce in their art sketch books, requires them to hone their observation skills and consider the essence and individuality of objects ranging from spiders to Victorian interiors. Displays of pupils' work throughout the school are of high quality and promote spiritual enrichment as well as increasing pupils' understanding.

- 51 The provision to develop pupils' moral and social development is very good. Teachers constantly reaffirm the principles of moral living and ensure that pupils are in no doubt as to the meaning of right and wrong. The school's discipline policy is based on the expectation that everyone should treat others with respect. Teachers reinforce this regularly during the day, making very good use of praise in order to instil in pupils the importance of valuing others as well as themselves. Pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss their class and school rules. Whenever disagreements occur, pupils are asked to discuss their problems and act in the way that they know is right. Pupils have many opportunities to work collaboratively and are actively encouraged to help each other. A sense of community is developed through activities such as the Year 5 'Energy Day' when pupils consider the use, storage and saving of energy, and the 'School Grounds Day' when, after various types of work in the grounds, the whole school enjoys a picnic together. A very good sense of responsibility and citizenship is promoted through activities such as the regular contributions made to charities and a visit to the town hall by Year 6 pupils to see how local government is conducted. Older pupils also have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit, and this greatly enhances their social development. Year 3 pupils make exchange visits with pupils from nearby village schools, and these help them to think about a wider context than their immediate surroundings. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to show initiative and responsibility when working on their own, when helping to tidy up, or when undertaking tasks such as setting up apparatus in physical education lessons or carrying messages to teachers.
- 52 The school provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their cultural awareness. However, in some subjects, opportunities are sometimes missed to celebrate and increase pupils' awareness of the contributions made by people from all cultures to the richness of life. Through religious education lessons pupils are taught about major world faiths. Teachers make good use of the variety of beliefs and depth of knowledge that pupils bring to the school community in order to help them understand the similarities and differences between religions and cultures. In art lessons pupils are carefully introduced to a range of different techniques and styles. In music pupils enjoy a variety of activities that promote their cultural awareness. For example, they compare songs from North America with those from China, and listen to a North American Indian rain dance. Books used in English lessons include some stories from other cultures, but much of the curriculum relates mostly to European culture with little reference to the history or customs of other countries, particularly those from which many of the pupils' families originate. Visits to the local area and visitors from the community help to develop pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils regularly visit places of interest related to their studies, such as Towneley Hall in Burnley, and occasionally, all pupils are given the opportunity to experience and enjoy a professional theatrical performance.
- 54 **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
- 53 Pupils receive very good support and guidance while at the school. Parents consider that the school provides well for the needs of individuals and they are confident that any concerns would be listened to and swiftly acted on. These high levels of support have been maintained since the previous inspection.

- 54 Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development are very good. Teachers keep detailed records about pupils' academic and personal progress, particularly in English and mathematics, and use the information thus gained when planning classroom activities. Teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils' family circumstances and, while being sympathetic to their individual needs, make no allowances in terms of their expectations. As a result, pupils respond successfully to the challenges presented during the school day.
- 55 Arrangements for the support and guidance of pupils with special educational needs are very good. Pupils requiring additional support because of special needs are identified early, often when they are in the nursery unit. The special needs coordinator ensures that good communications exist between parents, teachers and outside agencies such as health or social services. Support for special needs pupils is carefully targeted and closely monitored.
- 56 Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Although over half of the pupils in the school come from 'Asian Heritage' families, only fifteen per cent of pupils receive additional funding for special support. The specific needs of these pupils are clearly identified and recorded on a form devised by the school for this purpose. Carefully directed help in lessons is provided by bilingual assistants in the nursery and at Key Stage 1 and by a support teacher at both key stages.
- 57 The school's procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are highly effective because staff are consistent in their use of praise for good behaviour, thereby guiding pupils towards what is, and is not, acceptable. Procedures are in place to monitor and sanction poor behaviour, but these very seldom need to be used. Midday assistants support pupils well during the lunch break, ensuring that they eat in an appropriate manner. They supervise pupils with good humour and with high expectations of behaviour consistent with standards that apply at all other times of the school day. The fact that all staff act in a similar and predictable manner means that pupils know what to expect, feel secure in their surroundings and can therefore concentrate on their lessons without distraction.
- 58 The school also has very good procedures to monitor pupils' attendance. Teachers are very quick to notice and act upon any irregular attendance from individuals and, where appropriate, involve the education welfare officer. Work is sent home for pupils who are absent for a long time due to illness, while those who are taken on extended holidays are expected to complete diaries which they then share with the rest of the school on their return.
- 59 Procedures to ensure child protection are very good. The school's policy is easy to understand, staff know what to do if they have a concern, and the person in charge of this area keeps appropriate records in a confidential manner. Through the school's personal and social education programme, pupils are given suitable guidance on how to protect themselves. This programme also offers good opportunities for pupils to learn about issues such as personal hygiene and healthy living, with staff making sensitive adaptations to their plans according to circumstances. The school supports its Muslim pupils well, providing Halal food at lunchtimes and space for prayer and fasting during Ramadan. It arranges for the gradual introduction of its youngest children in the nursery to full time education in the reception classes, and this helps them to settle well. The needs of older pupils are also well met and pupils are sensitively prepared for transfer to secondary school. Staff act together very effectively in order to ensure the safety and general wellbeing of pupils. Many staff have been trained to administer first aid, and the school has carried out a survey of the accident books in order to try to prevent any avoidable injuries. Staff conduct regular risk assessments and act on the findings in order to eliminate potential hazards. The school was alerted to one minor hazard during the inspection.
- 61 **Partnership with parents and the community**
- 60 The school's partnership with parents and the community is good. The school has sustained and built

on the good partnership with parents and the community that were evident at the time of the previous inspection. Parents find staff very approachable and are confident that the school will contact them if there is any cause for concern. Members of the community are welcomed into school and staff make good use of the expertise and resources that are available in the community in order to enhance the provision for pupils. A very welcoming parents' room within the school provides a good facility for parents. The good two way partnership that has been developed has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and the standards that they achieve.

- 61 The quality of information provided for parents is good. It is well presented and easily read. The nursery prospectus and that for the main school are welcoming, informative and reassuring for new parents. The governors' annual report contains all of the required information and gives a brief overview of the previous year's activities. Particularly noteworthy is the school's twice yearly magazine entitled 'Together'. This is a very good publication that combines examples of pupils' work with information about the curriculum, such as what pupils do in their environmental education lessons. The issue produced at the time of the inspection gave a good overview of the changes in the school over the past ten years and created a real sense of 'family'. Parents are given appropriate notice of important dates and events but the school does not fully inform them about what their children will be learning in the coming term. Pupils' progress reports give a good indication of pupils' approach to individual subjects, the progress made and some targets for improvement. However, other than at the end of key stages, parents are not given a clear indication of their children's levels of attainment in relation to national expectations.
- 62 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress through reports, informal meetings and regular reviews of their children's work and response to the school's provision. The school ensures that parents are quickly informed whenever teachers have concerns about individual pupils.
- 63 Parents of pupils from homes in which English is not the first language are encouraged to work closely with the school. Bilingual written communications are available if necessary and bilingual staff are available if needed. The use of bilingual storybooks and tapes for the youngest pupils encourages these parents to support their children at home.
- 64 Parental involvement in their children's learning is satisfactory. The school regularly consults parents about important issues. For example, parents were asked about the quality and effectiveness of parents' evenings, and their opinions were surveyed before a decision was made about the introduction of school uniform. Teachers present 'workshops' in order to help parents to become involved in their children's learning at home, for example a member of staff has recently run a very successful course, in conjunction with Blackburn College, entitled 'Parents as Educators'. Participants are enthusiastic about the benefits of the course and most of them are now helping in school on a regular basis. There is no parent teacher association, but parents are supportive of the school. They attend parents' evenings in good numbers, support sponsored events to help augment resources, ensure that their children complete their homework and send their children to school in the new uniform. Some contribute to the school's '100 Club', the proceeds of which were recently used to buy a video camera.
- 65 The school's links with the community are good. Pupils participate in a good range of events organised at a variety of venues. The school hosts a weekly mother and toddler group for local parents, which provides a useful link with the school prior to children's admission to the nursery. Pupils visit the local church and other places of worship and benefit from the extra resources to which the school has access through its membership of the local centre for religious education. Pupils transfer to a number of different secondary schools, but there are particularly close links with Queen's Park High School. Staff

from the high school visit termly, offer French lessons and hockey training, and provide support for activities such as the Year 5 'Energy Day'. Various businesses also work in partnership with the school. Local firms provide resources for environmental and art work without which pupils' experiences would be restricted. Each year, pupils in Year 3 visit a sweet factory and use the information gathered to run their own 'mini-enterprise'. One firm is about to provide, free, reflective bands for pupils' coats while another has recently joined with the school in order to improve the shared approach road. The strength of the school's commitment to its community is recognised in its 'Schools' Curriculum Award'.

67

67 THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

67 Leadership and management

66 The report from the previous inspection noted that *'The quality of the school's management is exceptionally good'*. These high standards have been maintained. The school is very well led by the headteacher. She has a close working relationship with her staff, knows her pupils well and has a very clear view of the future development of the school. She is ably supported by her deputy and all staff and governors. There is a strong commitment to high standards and staff are very good at reflecting critically on their practice and seeking ways to improve.

67 Following the last inspection in June 1996, a plan was prepared to address the key issues for action identified in the report. These key issues have been successfully addressed. They are as follows:

68 *Key Issue 1: 'Establish learning improvement targets for the small number of pupils who are currently under-achieving. The school should enhance the amount of pupil involvement in target setting and in monitoring progress.'*

69 In response to this issue systems were immediately put into place to identify the pupils concerned, the large majority of whom were boys of white ethnicity. Once these pupils had been identified, learning improvement targets were introduced and focused support was provided. Progress was carefully monitored. The procedures developed as a result of this key issue now form part of a wider, comprehensive range of monitoring systems which are constantly in use. Pupils are now more involved in setting targets for improvement and monitor their progress through their individual 'Records of Achievement'.

70 *Key Issue 2: 'Extend the range of opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills in mathematics and science lessons.'*

71 In response to this issue an audit of work in mathematical and scientific investigations was undertaken through questionnaires and through discussions between teachers and the coordinators for these two subjects. Evaluations of these audits resulted in detailed plans of action, which have been regularly reviewed. In mathematics, the introduction of a new commercially produced scheme of work in 1997 and the subsequent implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy have both contributed to the success of the action plan. In science, the development of investigative and experimental work has been so successful at Key Stage 1 and at the earlier years of Key Stage 2 that now there is a need for even further development. This is because pupils' skills do not significantly improve between Years 5 and 6 because, in its present form, the scheme of work does not provide enough guidance for teachers at a higher level.

72 *Key Issue 3: 'Establish a more consistent approach to the day to day recording of assessments so as to ensure that the best practice already evident in the school is extended to all classes.'*

- 73 In response to this key issue the school set itself the task of devising and establishing a comprehensive whole school system for tracking pupils' progress. As part of its plan of action an entire teacher training day in 1997 was set aside for some of the work. Record keeping is now of a good standard. This is underpinned by detailed guidance to teachers concerning the minimum requirements for day to day records.
- 74 The governing body is supportive and successfully fulfils its role of critical friend to the school. Governors take a keen interest in the work of the school and visit regularly. The commitment of the chair of governors is considerable. Governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school through their visits and through the work of their committees. The governing body is organised efficiently and fulfils its legal responsibilities.
- 75 The quality of teaching and the curriculum are carefully monitored. All subject coordinators conduct an annual audit of their subjects; they maintain the 'Quality Assurance' files for each subject and monitor curriculum plans. Curriculum coordinators are released from class teaching duties to monitor the quality of provision in other classes. The headteacher also closely monitors the work of the school and has a very clear understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of teaching. While monitoring procedures are of a very good standard overall and are generally effective, they are not currently refined enough to respond to inconsistencies in the quality of provision that occur between some pairs of classes within the same year group. These are most evident in some subjects in the classes for the younger pupils at Key Stage 2. However, this is a minor shortcoming when set against the overall quality of teaching and school's clear commitment to overcome inconsistencies through sharing good practice. For example, all teachers have been given the opportunity to observe demonstration mathematics lessons taught by the subject coordinators.
- 76 The school development plan is extremely detailed and comprehensive. It sets out a clear view of the future priorities for improvement and the strategies to be used to achieve them. The development plan targets are appropriate, realistic and achievable and are agreed by all staff and governors. Good links are made between the targets identified in the school plan and those that feature in the local education authority's development plan.
- 77 The management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special needs coordinator has a very good overview of the quality of provision and carefully monitors the progress of identified pupils. The school's policy for special needs is exemplary; it is regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with staff. All recommendations of the special needs Code of Practice are fully met. Additional help received from outside agencies such as visiting support teachers is well managed. There is a governor with responsibility for special needs, and the governing body is kept well informed about special needs issues.
- 78 Provision for pupils from homes in which English is an additional language is well managed. Although the local authority funds the cost of the designated teacher and the bilingual classroom assistants, the school effectively deploys them. The success of the support is evident in the good standards now achieved by the large numbers of 'Asian heritage' pupils in Year 6.
- 79 The very good management systems that are in place and a strong underlying commitment to raising standards indicate that the school has a very good capacity for continuous improvement.
- 80 The school's ethos, based on its published values and very clear aims, is excellent and is fully reflected in its work.

82 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 81 There were no issues arising from the previous inspection report. The current inspection findings show that overall, the school's provision in this area is very good.
- 82 The school is very well staffed. There is a good number of very well qualified teachers and a suitable balance between very experienced and recently qualified teachers. Teachers give their pupils an effective level of education in all areas of the curriculum. Their knowledge and expertise meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has a very good number of experienced support staff. They give very effective help to teachers, to pupils with English as an additional language and to pupils with special educational needs. All staff, both teaching and non teaching, have clearly defined job descriptions. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject coordinators have a structured programme for observing, advising and working alongside colleagues in the classrooms. Procedures for staff appraisal are very good. The school is following the national requirements for appraisal. The school links appraisal targets to staff development and priorities in the school development plan. The school's arrangements for the professional development of staff are very good. They link closely to priorities in the school development plan and to perceived needs of the school and individuals. The school has a clear commitment to improving staff confidence and expertise. The success of this commitment is evident in its 'Investors in People' award. It keeps very careful and detailed records of staff training and analyses the impact this training has on the quality of education within the school. Staff disseminate the knowledge and information they acquire to their colleagues on a structured basis at staff meetings and on training days. There is a clear policy for procedures for the induction of teachers new to the school. There is a mentor for new teachers, the guidelines contained in job descriptions are very clear and work effectively. All members of staff new to the school receive a good level of support through regular meetings with their mentor. Staffing levels, qualifications and experience are very good and have a positive impact on the quality of education in the school.
- 83 The accommodation is good. There are sufficient rooms for the number of classes and the school makes very good use of its available space. While most classrooms are of a good size, some are rather cramped. This restricts investigative work in subjects such as science. The hall is large enough for activities in physical education and it is used well. There is reasonable provision for wheelchair access and toilet facilities for physically handicapped people. Standards of cleaning are very good. The caretaker and the cleaning team take much pride in their work. There are good sized hard play areas and a very pleasant grassed area. The grounds provide effective facilities for sporting activities. Children under five have regular access to a secure outdoor play area, and recent improvements to the nursery have provided children with a good sized indoor facility for play in the event of inclement weather.
- 84 The school is generally well resourced. All learning resources are of good quality and are readily accessible for use by pupils and adults. The school is continuing to develop all subject resources, particularly in subjects such as information technology. Resources for information technology and music are satisfactory and for all other subjects except religious education they are good. In religious education, the school's access to a wide range of artefacts from the local schools' centre provides pupils with very good quality resources. The school has a well stocked library for each key stage; these are well organised and use classification systems suitable for the age range of pupils using them. This assists pupils in the development of their ability to select books efficiently. Resources for art include artefacts and pictures from non western cultures. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. The storage and labelling of resources is good. Children under five in the nursery and reception classes are well provided with a good range of suitable equipment.

86 **The efficiency of the school**

- 85 The school is efficient and well run. The available financial and general resources are well targeted towards meeting the school's aims and educational priorities. This is an aspect of school life that has been well maintained since the last inspection.
- 86 The level of financial planning is good with appropriate use being made of the grants and general finance made available to the school annually. The setting of the annual budget is closely linked to the annual audits carried out by subject coordinators each year and these in turn contribute to the school development plan. The governors' finance committee, in close consultation with the headteacher, decides the final annual budget. The finance committee and the governing body are actively involved with all financial decisions, and have a good knowledge of the finances of the school through a useful and well presented monthly balance sheet provided by the headteacher using data from the Blackburn and Darwen authority. The finance committee reviews its financial priorities on a regular basis, in order to meet the changing needs of the school. These judgements confirm those of the last audit of the school accounts in 1997 when it was noted that management of finances in school was good and that the school achieved high standards in its expenditure and budgetary control. Some minor issues identified in the report have been addressed.
- 87 During a period of uncertainty about the nature of future delegated income at the time of transition from funding by Lancashire to funding by the new unitary authority, the school allowed its contingency fund to significantly exceed the accepted norm. The purpose of this was to enable some essential improvements to be made to the premises. These included the provision of new toilets, the building of a much-needed covered area for the nursery and a secure perimeter fence in order to respond to increased criminal damage to the fabric of the school. Following the establishment of the new unitary authority of Blackburn with Darwen, finance for these important projects was made available to the school, bolstered by government funding through the 'New Deals for Schools' initiative. Rather than spend accrued funds on any one specific project, the governing body decided to focus on those issues that would best support pupils and staff and thus help to raise standards of attainment. This resulted in additional non-teaching staff, welfare assistants, and classroom assistants to support both pupils with special educational needs and all pupils in general. Although the school will continue to carry forward a contingency fund of above average size at the end of this financial year, it is expected that the fund will be reduced to an acceptable figure of about five per cent of the school budget by the spring of 2000.
- 88 Very good use is made of additional funding received from the local authority 'Ethnic Minority Achievement Group' in respect of pupils for whom English is not their first language. Two bilingual nursery nurses provide essential help in translation for the youngest pupils and ensure that they make a smooth transition into school life. A support teacher works in all Year 1 and 2 classes and in Years 5 and 6 and provides both advice to teachers in planning their work and help for individual pupils within the classes.
- 89 Additional funding received in respect of pupils identified as having special educational needs is very well spent. The school supplements these funds from its own resources.
- 90 The day to day control of finances is good. Routine administration is efficient and enables teachers to work effectively. The school secretary makes a significant contribution to the work of the school.
- 91 Both teaching and support staff are used well to ensure that the needs of pupils are met and that all aspects of the curriculum are taught effectively and efficiently. Particularly good use is made of the support assistants assigned to pupils with special education needs. However, on some occasions, additional teachers in classrooms are not used in the most efficient manner and their skills are not used appropriately.

- 92 The available accommodation is used in an efficient manner, and meets the needs of both staff and pupils. Very good use is made of the hall for a range of purposes. Good use is also made of the school grounds for both sporting activities, and for pupils to use during break times and at lunchtimes. Corridors and other open areas are used well for small group activities and for help for individual pupils. High quality displays around the school do much to contribute to pupils' learning, and make an efficient contribution to the ethos of the school.
- 93 Resources for learning are used in an efficient manner and make a significant contribution to the raising of standards in all areas of the curriculum.
- 94 Effective and efficient use is made of a very good range of educational visits including residential visits. A considerable number of visitors and a very good range of extra curricular activities are used effectively to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, and to provide an enriched curriculum.
- 95 In considering the value for money provided by the school, the following factors need to be taken into consideration:
- 96 Pupils come to the school from an area with a higher than average proportion of socially disadvantaged households. When children join the nursery their attainment is well below what is normally expected of three year olds and a significant number of these children have little experience of speaking English. They make rapid progress, but when they enter the main school their attainment is below average. The quality of the school's provision, particularly the good quality of teaching, the very good assessment procedures and good use of assessment information and the very good procedures for support and guidance of pupils makes a significant impact. As a result, the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is above national expectations. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to work and the quality of their personal development are both very good. Their behaviour and the quality of relationships within the school are excellent. These standards are achieved with an income per pupil that is below the national average.
- 97 In view of the standards achieved from a low starting point, together with the good improvement made since the last inspection and the school's very good capacity for future improvement, the school provides excellent value for money. This judgement confirms that of the previous inspection.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

99 AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

98 The majority of children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below average in most areas of learning. A significant number of these children have little experience of speaking English. They respond well to the quality provision in the nursery and make good progress. On entry to the reception classes children's levels of attainment, except for their personal and social development, which is sound, are below what is normally expected of children of this age. They make rapid progress in developing their language and number skills in the reception classes. By the time they are five most children are likely to acquire the skills they need to meet the recommendations of the nationally agreed 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning'. Overall, all children make very good progress in their personal and social development. Most children make good progress in the development of their language and literacy, mathematical and creative skills. They develop a good knowledge and understanding of the world and make good progress in their physical development. The school is continuing to maintain and develop the good level of provision for children under five reported at the time of the previous inspection.

100 Personal and social development

99 Children settle quickly into the security of the nursery and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Children are self possessed and confident when moving around the nursery. They share and take turns amicably, for example when testing materials to see which are waterproof. Most children concentrate very well on their tasks, such as when cutting strips of paper to make collage. They work quietly and do not talk to each other very much. The children are content to be in the nursery and cooperate happily with each other and adults. They take care of classroom equipment and

soon learn to tidy up after themselves. Children continue this level of progress in their personal development as they move into the reception classes. They work well independently and together. They are eager to try new ideas. All children persevere to finish their tasks and take considerable pride in their work. The reception teachers encourage children to solve problems. An example of this is when they ask children to make choices in their artwork. Children quickly understand the routines of school life and move quietly and confidently around the school. They change their clothes for physical education lessons independently and fold them neatly. By the time they are five all children are likely to achieve the expected levels in the development of their social skills and many are likely to attain levels above those expected for their age. This is particularly noticeable in their ability to be independent and to relate well to each other.

101 **Language and literacy**

100 The provision for the development of language and literacy is good. Most children enter the nursery unit with well below average language skills and make good progress. They share books and stories with adults and each other and enjoy looking at books. Support staff for children with English as an additional language give very effective and sensitive assistance. This enables children to understand and follow instructions and develops their ability to understand English. Children who speak English, but have immature speech patterns, receive a good level of individual help and support to increase their speaking skills. All children quickly understand that print conveys meaning. They know to read books from left to right and handle them carefully. Children listen to well known stories and songs, but many have difficulty joining in with them. All children learn to use pencils correctly. They increase their early writing skills in a range of activities. This good rate of progress continues as children move into the reception classes. Children with English as an additional language and children with special educational needs continue to receive effective support. The reception class teachers use elements of the National Literacy Strategy to develop and extend children's listening, speaking and reading skills. They further develop and extend this through their careful selection of books and stories. Children have many opportunities for role play. For example, the role play area in one classroom was used as an imaginary hospital; through this medium children made good progress in developing their speaking, listening and writing skills, particularly in learning letter sounds. All children listen very carefully to stories. They re-tell them, enjoy talking about the pictures and join in with familiar sentences and refrains. Children are eager to choose books to take home. Those for whom English is an additional language are well supported in this activity through the use of dual language books and tapes. Children respond well in class and group discussions. They make good progress in developing their skills of speaking and listening and are beginning to speak well in sentences. Children consolidate and develop their early writing skills and hold and use pencils correctly. By the time they are five, most children are likely to achieve the desirable learning outcomes for language and literacy.

102 **Mathematics**

101 The provision for children's mathematical development is good. Most children make good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills. Many children enter the nursery unit with a well below average range of number skills. The members of the nursery staff effectively develop these skills through a carefully structured programme of work. This includes the use of construction activities to develop awareness of space and sequencing and counting activities. There is a very good level of support for children with English as an additional language. This enables them to become familiar with English number names. Children with special educational needs make good progress in developing their knowledge of numbers. The more able children count accurately to five. All children sing simple number rhymes. Children enter the reception classes with a developing range of mathematical skills. The reception teachers continue to build on and develop these early skills very well. Children have 45 minutes of structured number work each day. Most children count and order objects to 10 and count accurately to 10 and above. They know and recognise the place of numbers up to ten on a number line.

About half of the children count accurately in twos. All children recognise and identify simple capacity such as 'full', 'half full' and 'empty'. They use these terms accurately when they pour water into bottles. Children further develop their mathematical learning through the use of the computer. This gives them increased awareness of shape and movement. Children make gains in their ability to consolidate, build on and develop their early mathematical experiences. The more able children are beginning to understand the concept of numbers to ten. For example, they recognise number content without counting matching objects. Most children are likely to attain the desirable learning outcomes for mathematics by the time they are five.

103 **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

102 The school has good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make good progress in developing this area of learning. They have many opportunities in the nursery and the reception classes to explore the natural and man made world. For example, children experimented with materials to explore waterproof properties and ultimately decided that skin is waterproof. Children show amazement as they mix egg with a butter and sugar mixture and see it become runny. They continue this good rate of progress as they move into the reception classes. They look carefully at X-ray pictures and model skeletons. This enables children to develop a good understanding of how the skeleton provides a frame for their bodies. One child expressed this understanding clearly by saying: *'If you didn't have any bones you'd flop down like a wobbly jelly'*. Children understand that the skull protects the brain. Those with English as an additional language receive very effective support in these and other activities. All are confident in skills such as cutting, folding and sticking. They use a computer as a matter of routine and develop confidence in their ability to use the keyboard and mouse for control. They know how to save information. Most children print out work independently. By the time they are five, most children are likely to reach the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes.

104 **Physical development**

103 The school makes good provision for children's physical development and children make good progress. They use pencils, crayons, scissors and glue with increasing control as they progress from the nursery to the reception classes. Children use play dough and wet sand to mould into shapes. They satisfactorily develop their fine control skills. Children in the nursery and the reception classes develop their climbing and balancing skills well. They have opportunities to run, jump and skip and use wheeled toys with an increasing awareness of space. There is a secure area for outdoor activities for nursery children. While there is no access to this area for children in the reception classes, this does not detract from the good progress these children make in developing their ability to use their bodies well. The school has a suitable selection of large apparatus for children to use in the outdoor area. All children are likely to attain the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.

105 **Creative development**

104 The school's provision for children's creative development is good. They make good progress as they learn basic techniques. This enables them to use and control materials effectively. Most children acquire the level of skills necessary to reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. Children mix powder paint to achieve different colours. They use brushes confidently to apply paint to paper. They make prints from finger paintings and, in the reception classes, develop their ability to observe well. An example of this is the work children do after looking closely at a print of work by Matisse. They show a good awareness of shape and colour. Children sing a variety of songs from memory and use percussion instruments correctly and confidently to maintain rhythm.

105 The quality of teaching for the children under five is good. Over three quarters of all lessons observed

were good or better and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This consistent quality of teaching reflects the good progress children make in their early years at school. The teachers, nursery nurses and support staff work very effectively together to promote learning. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children. All members of staff have suitably high expectations of achievement and behaviour. They give children challenging and interesting tasks to consolidate and develop their knowledge and understanding. All members of staff use language very well. They speak precisely and clearly. This ensures that all children, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is particularly noticeable in the development of the communication skills of speaking and listening. Staff teach specific skills, such as using paint and musical instruments, correctly. They correctly place much emphasis on encouraging pupils to work independently and make choices. All members of the nursery and reception staff work closely together to plan a well balanced and broadly based curriculum for children under five.

106 The nursery makes good provision for children's all round development and education and the reception classes build very effectively on the work of the nursery. The curriculum for children under five is effective in promoting all elements of the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Curriculum planning for children under five is thorough and detailed. The nursery and reception class teachers plan together to ensure that there is no unnecessary repetition of work. This gives children a firm foundation for work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

107 The nursery and reception classes provide an effective level of support for children with special educational needs. Children with English as an additional language are also very well catered for. All members of staff ensure that children have full and equal access to the areas of learning. Parents greatly value and appreciate the work children do in the nursery and reception classes.

109

109 **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

109 **English**

108 The results of the most recent National Curriculum tests indicate that in 1999 standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 were below the national average in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 or above. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was also below average. However, when results are compared with those of schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are average.

109 At the end of Key Stage 1, the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests indicate that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 2 or above was well above the national average in reading and above average in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above average in reading, but well below average in writing.

110 An analysis of trends over time shows that at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' performance was about at the national average in both 1996 and 1997, results then dipped in 1998 but rose again in 1999 to a level close to those of 1996 and 1997. At the end of Key Stage 1 results have remained above the national average for the past four years. Statistical evidence suggests that the performance of girls is generally better than that of boys in English.

111 Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is now above national expectations at the end of both key stages in terms of the proportion of pupils in line to achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of the academic year. This represents an improvement on standards observed at the time of the previous inspection when attainment was judged to be broadly in line with national expectations. The difference between inspection findings and the results of previous years' tests is due to year on year differences

between the groups of pupils compared and to the breadth of attainment inspected in comparison with the relatively narrow range of skills tested. The school acknowledges the higher standards being achieved by pupils in Year 6 and has increased the targets set for them.

- 112 The school is successfully addressing the issue of the relatively lower performance of Key Stage 2 pupils and the low attainment of those pupils who join the school with poor language skills at Key Stage 1 and those who move from other schools. This is due to the emphasis placed on literacy. The rigorous and effective implementation of the literacy hour since September 1998 has had a positive impact on pupils' progress and standards are improving. Pupils in all year groups make good progress and the overall literacy levels are now above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that older pupils have made significant progress in all elements of English. The school is now well placed to bring about further and greater improvements in the overall attainment of pupils.
- 113 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set out for them, and whilst for some pupils attainment is below average, nevertheless a significant percentage of them achieve standards nearer the national norm. Direct and appropriate teaching of specific skills helps those pupils to make good progress in English. While statistical data from previous years indicates that girls generally achieve higher standards than boys, inspection evidence does not substantiate this. Currently there are no significant variations in the rates of progress of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in both key stages through consistently challenging work to meet their specific needs. Therefore, these pupils achieve levels that are well above the national average in all elements of the subject.
- 114 Although the proportion of pupils from homes in which English is not the first language is high, progress in acquiring skills is rapid due to the high quality of support provided. By the time these pupils are at Key Stage 2, the specific help given focuses largely on developing vocabulary and is therefore very similar in nature to the language support given to a number of pupils of English ethnicity identified as having special educational needs. The use of translation and dual language books is largely confined to the under fives and to the early stages of Key Stage 1.
- 115 Literacy levels are good throughout the school and support learning in those subjects where pupils need to use reading and writing. Very good examples were seen in science work in Year 2 where pupils wrote about 'What we need to stay alive' using well constructed sentences, correctly spelt and punctuated. In research work about the Ancient Egyptians, pupils in Year 3 recorded relevant information from history books. In mathematics, Year 6 pupils analysed and clearly interpreted results from graphs. Pupils' work shows growing competence in reading and writing across all subjects of the curriculum. At both key stages, pupils use information technology to practise and to extend their literacy skills.
- 116 By the end of Key Stage 1, despite the high proportion of pupils from homes in which English is not regularly spoken, standards of speaking and listening are average. Pupils are confident and fluent speakers. This helps them to cope with their work and enables them to answer questions in class and to participate in discussions. They offer their own observations about their reading and take turns to speak. Pupils listen to one another's contributions and observations; they explain meaning of words clearly and distinctly. A good example was observed when Year 2 pupils explained 'add' when writing instructions, and rearranged the sequence of their sentences to ensure that they could be followed.
- 117 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of speaking and listening are those expected nationally. Pupils in Year 6 used examples from their literature to illustrate their meaning when discussing texts and explained lucidly and concisely different styles of books such as fantasy, science fiction or adventure.
- 118 By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of reading are above average. Pupils read fluently and with

considerable confidence and accuracy. They read and follow instructions for their work. Most pupils read independently by the age of seven, discuss their favourite books and give reasons for choosing them. They can recall the stories they have read and define the main points of text, as observed in their shared and guided reading. Pupils can employ a whole range of reading cues to correct their own mistakes.

- 119 By the end of Key Stage 2, reading standards exceed the national average. Pupils enjoy and understand what they read and talk about the characters in their books. Pupils read for different purpose and can adopt appropriate strategies for the task, including skimming to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. They use dictionaries and thesauruses when required to aid their understanding. Pupils use these skills in other subjects, notably in history and in religious education, and show competence in locating and abstracting relevant information to support their work. Pupils often choose books according to their authors, and by the end of the key stage, they have experienced a wide and varied range of literature including poetry. For example, they knew about the work of authors such as Charles Dickens, Rudyard Kipling, Roald Dahl and C.S. Lewis. The higher attaining pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a mature understanding of different layers of meaning in their reading. These pupils' attainment is well above average.
- 120 By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in writing are above average overall. Pupils work in a range of forms including stories, poems, instructions and factual accounts, for example about famous people such as Samuel Pepys or Louis Pasteur. In their writing, pupils demonstrate their knowledge of the sound and spelling systems, which they use well in their work. They use linking sentences that are well constructed and correctly punctuated. Pupils' handwriting and presentation is above average. Pupils use joined, fluent, evenly formed letters, which are neatly presented in their books and in displays around their classrooms.
- 121 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of writing are above average. Pupils write in a range of styles and for different purposes including stories, poems, newspaper articles and dialogues. Pupils develop, organise and communicate ideas in their carefully constructed and complex sentences. There are good examples of extended writing in English, which show that pupils can arrange their writing in paragraphs. They employ a wide range of punctuation marks correctly, including parentheses and colons. Pupils spell and use complex, regular and irregular polysyllabic words and use these confidently in English and across the curriculum. Standards of handwriting and presentation are above average; pupils' handwriting is joined, neat, fluent and often written in ink.
- 122 Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 in relation to their prior attainment. In speaking and listening, pupils acquire and use new vocabulary such as 'utensils', 'ingredients' and 'glossary' as evidenced in the explanations they give. They show increasing confidence when talking in front of their class in their literacy sessions and speak clearly when asked to explain their work. For example, in Year 2, pupils evaluated whether their instructions and illustrations were clear and easy to follow. Teachers take opportunities to increase pupils' vocabulary and understanding in English and in other subjects. Pupils' good progress is attributable to good teaching. This was evident at the time of the inspection, when teachers deliberately used very precise language in all their lessons.
- 123 At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in speaking and listening. Some very good examples were seen in all classes during the literacy sessions when pupils confidently discussed styles of writing or effective use of vocabulary by authors and poets. For example, in Year 3, pupils explained what adjectives are and used them to enhance texts. In Year 4 pupils made reference to the text to substantiate their answers and explanations and demonstrated their understanding of differences between fact and opinion when reading their texts. Year 5 pupils expressed clearly the features that make good instructional text. They confidently used appropriate terminology such as 'imperative verbs' for their instructional writing. Good examples of discussions were observed in Year 6, where pupils

talked about their personal responses to poetry and explained with clarity and confidence how and why a text affected them. In religious education, they explained the term 'Omniscient Narrator'. In this lesson about the nativity story, pupils explored feelings and emotions sensitively as to how Mary might have felt when she found that she was to have a baby. Throughout the key stage, teachers plan opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary in English lessons and across subjects of the curriculum. This careful planning makes a valuable contribution to pupils' good progress in speaking and listening.

- 124 In reading, pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. Their reading is well supported by regular reading at home. Pupils' progress is further enhanced by the home/school reading records, which are consistently maintained in all classes. These contain helpful guidelines for parents to follow. Pupils enjoy books and read texts accurately and with understanding. Their reading is fluent and expressive. Pupils make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds and a growing vocabulary to develop their skills in reading. The strong focus on reading in the literacy hour enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring reading skills.
- 125 At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in reading. They read with confidence, obvious enthusiasm and for pleasure. Pupils show comprehension of complex texts, such as those found in books by C.S. Lewis and often explain the authors' intentions, showing mature understanding of text. They show increasing ability to abstract required information from their reading efficiently.
- 126 In writing, pupils make good progress at both key stages. Through their guided and shared writing sessions, pupils acquire writing skills, which they are beginning to transfer successfully to other subjects. Their progress is accelerated through good teaching and the efficient support that they receive from assistants in all classes. Very good strategies have been put into effect following a close analysis of National Curriculum tests. As a result, the school has successfully introduced lessons where pupils are given planned opportunities to practise, consolidate and extend their newly learned skills. Precision in the use of terminology and attention to detail are consistently emphasised by teachers in English and in other subjects. As a result, pupils are learning to improve the quality of their writing. Enthusiastic teaching of English is another factor of good progress throughout the school. There are many examples where pupils have been inspired to produce imaginatively written pieces of work. Working in pairs, Year 6 pupils composed the following poem:

The Gale
Slates were elevated from the garage canopy and
were in pieces on the ground,
The uproar of the trees thrashing about whilst the
Gale yelled through its branches was startling,
The atrocious wind bellowed like wolves,
A full moon was spotted hidden, in the cloud,
Which had swirled past, as if bubbling in a
cauldron.

- 127 Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to English are very good and this has a positive effect on the progress they make. They sustain concentration and are developing very good study habits. They listen courteously and carefully and take pleasure when reading or re-telling their stories. Pupils are often observed to be absolutely engrossed in their work. For example, in Year 6 they enjoy the effect of words when discussing the images brought to their minds by a poem by James Berry. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2, when reviewing 'The Witches' by R. Dahl, show clear enjoyment of stories. One pupil wrote: 'The Witches is a story put together with humour and excitement. I have a number of favourite parts. What he writes makes a picture in our minds.'

- 128 In all classes, pupils show respect for the ideas and efforts of others. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, respond very well to the activities provided for them in reading and writing and contribute well to discussions.
- 129 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages with 44 per cent very good or better teaching seen during the inspection. These lessons were characterised by brisk pace, challenging tasks, high expectations and infectious enthusiasm. As a result, pupils made very good progress in these lessons. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of English to teach and link together the skills of oracy and literacy systematically. They use these skills effectively in teaching the appropriate programmes of study and plan opportunities to reinforce and extend skills in subject across the curriculum. Support staff, students and teachers' assistants are used effectively throughout the school. Planning which is undertaken together, is thorough. There is very good liaison between staff, which promotes continuity of learning and the progressive development of pupils' skills. There are very good procedures for assessments; information from these is carefully recorded and used for planning and to set targets. Another strength of these arrangements is the pupils' and parents' involvement in target setting. Marking is regular and kept up to date. There are some good comments on how pupils may improve and develop their work. The higher attaining pupils are provided with consistently challenging work to meet their specific needs. All pupils are encouraged to work independently, for example, to research projects in the library without supervision. Homework is set regularly; this supports and extends pupils' learning in the subject. Parents are involved in their children's learning and give good support at home.
- 130 Overall, the quality of leadership in the subject is very good. English is well led by the coordinator at Key Stage 1. In conjunction with the headteacher, a decision was taken to introduce joined script to pupils in Year 1. As a result, pupils at this key stage have successfully laid the foundations of a fluent, easy, neat style of handwriting. The coordinator for Key Stage 2 leads the development of the subject very well through her high quality teaching skills. She monitors teaching and learning in English and shares her findings with teachers and Key Stage 1 coordinator. The findings are systematically documented, targets for improvements are set and outcomes subsequently evaluated. Both coordinators have established clear direction for the subject and actively monitor teachers' plans and pupils' work. The policy and schemes of work ensure a balanced coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum. This is undertaken in conjunction with the headteacher who keeps an overview of progress throughout the school.
- 132 **Mathematics**
- 131 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 or above in mathematics was above the national average. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average. When compared with similar schools, with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in 1999 were well above average. When results from the past three years are compared, the trend is of steady improvement year on year from a position in 1996 when attainment was below average.
- 132 Results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show a similar picture, with the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 2 or above being above average. However, fewer pupils at this key stage achieved the higher Level 3, and attainment at this higher level was close to the national average. A scrutiny of results over time shows that standards have remained at or above the national average since 1996. Statistics from the national tests indicate that there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms this.
- 133 Inspection findings indicate that at the end of both key stages pupils achieve standards that are above average. Throughout both key stages they make good progress in all elements of the subject.

- 134 The development of number skills is particularly good. Pupils use their number skills well across the curriculum. This reflects their achievements in the 1999 standard assessment tests and tasks. The school correctly gives pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop the investigative element of mathematics and pupils make good progress in developing their skills of investigation. The development of pupils' investigative skills was a key issue for improvement from the previous inspection, and this has successfully been addressed. Pupils use information technology well to support data handling work. This is also a marked improvement since the previous inspection. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on raising standards.
- 135 At Key Stage 1 the younger infant pupils add and subtract numbers to 10, recognise pattern, simple relationships and sequences. They satisfactorily understand the language related to these operations. Most pupils are working at a level above the expectation for their age. By the end of the key stage pupils use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to solve problems with whole numbers. All pupils use different ways to solve problems and explain their reasons confidently. They successfully identify two and three dimensional shapes and use an accurate mathematical vocabulary such as 'corner', 'face' and 'triangular prism'. Pupils know number 'bonds' to twenty and understand that, for example, the answer to $6 + 14$ is the same as $14 + 6$. The more able pupils work out and understand the two and five times tables. They double and halve numbers and use all four number operations well. Most pupils work at a level above the expectation for their age.
- 136 At Key Stage 2 the younger pupils use a variety of methods and language when carrying out addition and subtraction operations. They know how to investigate pattern in different ways and they present their findings clearly. Pupils are confident in their ability to add and subtract numbers with two digits. Most pupils carry forward totals correctly. They use their knowledge of the 2, 3, 4 and 5 times tables to solve written and mental problems. In Year 4 pupils recognise the pattern when adding on nine and ninety-nine. They are confident in their use and application of language such as 'horizontal', 'vertical' and 'axis' when they construct bar charts and graphs. Pupils collate, record and analyse data carefully. They answer given questions correctly. The most able pupils raise and answer questions of their own. They explain their reasoning confidently and understand there are a range of different strategies for working out answers. Pupils in Year 5 described the properties of a triangle and moved on to investigate these through discussion. One pupil stated that '*A triangle has no right angles*'. Other pupils discussed and explored this observation and then decided that a triangle can have one right angle. They understand the properties of equilateral; isosceles; scalene and right angled triangles. Pupils know that a rectangle has to have four right angles and two pairs of parallel sides. The higher attaining pupils in Year 6 recognise and identify square numbers on sight. All pupils know the difference between prime numbers and numbers with factors. They develop their skills of estimation well as they estimate the results of sponsored events. All pupils look for patterns as they try out ideas. They explain their reasoning logically. Pupils count on in decimals in twos from 0.2 to 5.0 and 0.25 to 3.0 accurately. They know the equivalent fractions and percentages. Most pupils solve 'magic square' problems successfully and work in pairs to construct magic squares. All pupils work at a level above the expectations for their age.
- 137 By the age of eleven pupils have very well developed skills in numeracy. They know and use number facts, such as times tables, in their written and mental work. Pupils in Year 6 understand how to add, subtract and order decimals. They know how to work out percentages. They understand the correlation between decimals, percentages and fractions. Pupils use a range of suitable computation methods to work out mathematical problems. They show an increasing ability to reason logically when they explain their findings.
- 138 Throughout the school the pupils have a good knowledge of shape and space. They know how to measure time and are gaining a sense of the passage of time through sequencing the days of the week.

The pupils recognise and understand the need for a standard measurement of time. The school is promoting skills and understanding of measurement of length, mass and capacity well. Pupils apply these skills in work such as design and technology at Key Stage 2. An example of this was observed when pupils planned, measured and made hexagonal shaped jewellery boxes. Pupils' work in mathematics makes a good contribution to their literacy skills as they learn to read problems and follow written instructions.

- 139 Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. They quickly develop skills in number and increase their speed of response in mental arithmetic. They make good progress in learning suitable technical words and in consolidating their knowledge of sequential terms. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in their ability to recognise the correlation between repeated addition and multiplication. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils make very good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge and skills. They consolidate previous learning very well and make rapid progress in learning new skills. Progress throughout the school is good overall. There is some slowing of progress at the beginning of Key Stage 2. This reflects the quality of teaching. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing their ability to use and apply mathematics to everyday situations. They also make good progress in extending their number skills. At Key Stage 2, approximately 50 per cent of pupils make very good progress in developing their mathematical skills and concepts. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 make very good progress in their ability to explain their methods and reasoning. All pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress in their ability to use and apply mathematics. They make very good progress in developing and increasing their number skills. This is significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- 140 Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have effective support from class teachers and support assistants. They receive suitable individual help, which enables them to make good progress against the specific targets set for them. Pupils with English as an additional language continue to build on the very good foundation they receive in the nursery and reception classes. This enables them to make at least good progress in mathematics. Many make very good progress in Year 6.
- 141 Pupils' show a high level of concentration and perseverance when working on their mathematics. They have positive attitudes and want to do well. By Year 2 most pupils are keen to join in discussion. Pupils respond with enthusiasm when they carry out challenging and thought provoking investigations. On some occasions a very small number of pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 sometimes lose interest in their work. This is rare but, where it happens, these pupils do not complete their work. This affects attainment and progress adversely. The positive approach to learning enables pupils to begin to develop the ability to work independently when exploring ideas at both key stages. Their overall behaviour is very good. Pupils handle resources sensibly. In most lessons there is a productive working atmosphere. Pupils work together collaboratively when they investigate and solve problems. They relate very well to each other and to adults. There is a good deal of mutual respect in all lessons. The school is continuing to maintain and develop pupils' good attitudes to learning from the previous inspection.
- 142 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Over a quarter of all lessons are very good or better and one outstanding lesson was observed. This represents a considerable improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Most teachers understand mathematical processes well. They all plan their work carefully, use a variety of methods and strategies and lessons develop at a crisp pace. Teachers make use of many formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills, for example, counting and subtracting during registration and in action rhymes and songs. They ensure that pupils know what work they are to do and set clear targets for learning. In the most effective lessons teachers have very high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They plan work carefully to match the needs and abilities of all pupils. There is a clear structure in these lessons. The teachers challenge and explore thinking by the skilful use of questions. They plan work on the basis of subsequent attainment. There is systematic, regular and thorough

practising of number. This enables pupils' use of number facts and patterns to become automatic. Teachers use a correct technical vocabulary to advance pupils' knowledge and base new work on their assessments of pupils' understanding. There is a discrepancy between the quality of teaching in some classes at both key stages. This affects the quality of learning for some pupils and leads to a slowing of progress. The school is continuing to maintain and develop its previous good standards of teaching.

143 The scheme of work in mathematics is clear and gives teachers very effective support and guidance in planning work. It sets out very clear progressive learning steps for the development of mathematical skills and concepts. There is a suitably strong emphasis on the investigative element of mathematics throughout the scheme. Assessment procedures for mathematics are very good and all teachers use them very well to track pupils' progress and to plan future work. The school has a good selection of resources for mathematics. They are easily accessible, of good quality and are well used. Through its careful monitoring, the school is aware of the differences in the quality of teaching between some classes and is attempting to improve the situation by sharing good practice. Leadership of the subject is very good.

145 Science

144 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests show that the percentage of pupils achieving the national target of Level 4 and above was close to the national average. The percentage achieving the higher Level 5 was also broadly in line with the national average. When results are compared with those of similar schools, standards in 1999 were above average. When results over time are compared, the trend is of steady improvement since 1997. In 1999 girls achieved significantly better than boys in science, but inspection evidence indicates that this is not likely to occur again this year.

145 Inspection evidence indicates that, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are currently making satisfactory progress and are achieving standards that are broadly average. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. However, data from the school indicates that the number of pupils likely to achieve the national target of Level 4 is likely to rise by the end of the year.

146 Teacher assessment in 1999 showed that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the national target of Level 2 or above was above that achieved nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 was also above average. When comparing the school's results to those of similar schools the results were well above average. This maintains the standards achieved in 1998.

147 Inspection evidence indicates that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are in line to achieve standards that are above average by the end of the school year. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with the national average.

148 At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress and, in lessons observed, made very good and occasionally excellent progress. In Year 1 pupils make very good progress in developing scientific skills. More than one third of the pupils are able to predict which materials will allow light to shine through and give a reason for it. They say things such as, '*the clear plastic will allow light to shine through it because I can see you through it*' or '*because it is like the red cellophane and that allowed light through*'. When learning about light one higher attaining pupil was able to say that light travels in straight lines and this is why shadows are formed. Other pupils nodded in agreement. In the area of life and living processes pupils learn about themselves and can explain the human life cycle. Pupils at the end of the key stage are able to identify common materials and recognise some of their characteristics. For example, most pupils know that some articles can be changed by squashing and bending but that others cannot. They realise that this is because of the materials that the items are made from.

- 149 Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2. Pupils at the end of the key stage have a good understanding of plant growth and more able pupils can name the parts of a plant and explain their function. They know the term 'photosynthesis' and explain why a plant needs light. Average attaining pupils explain what a food chain is and know that a green plant is normally at the bottom of the chain. Most pupils have a good understanding of the differences between solids, liquids and gases and more able pupils explain evaporation and condensation. Most pupils know that sound is vibration and that light travels in straight lines. They know that we see objects because the light is reflected from the object into our eyes.
- 150 Pupils at both key stages make good progress in quickly learning investigative skills. This is because the school has successfully addressed this key issue from its previous inspection and the approach used to develop pupils' investigative skills is very effective. By Years 5 pupils are able to recognise a fair test. They can plan their own investigations and can think of different ways to record their findings. Good teaching encourages pupils to interpret their findings and in this way investigations are used well to further knowledge and understanding. However, because no step by step development of pupils' skills is built into the scheme of work, pupils' progress slows in Year 6 and they do not attain the higher than average levels of which many are capable. The school has so successfully addressed the key issue of developing pupils' investigative skills in science that it has now created another area for further development. This is the need to target higher attaining pupils to ensure that they reach the higher levels of which they are capable. At both key stages pupils identified as having special educational needs, and those for whom English is not the first language, are very well supported by classroom assistants and by the way in which class teachers carefully match work to their abilities. They make good progress.
- 151 Pupils' attitudes towards science, which were positive at the time of the last inspection, are still good at both key stages. When teaching is excellent then response is also excellent. Pupils are highly motivated and listen well and take a full part in the lessons. They give their best efforts. In all lessons pupils discuss issues and think about what they are doing. They are confident to ask questions. When working in groups or in pairs they are well focused on activities and do not waste time. When planning an investigation or carrying one out, for example when testing to see which soil drained the best, they collaborate well and share responsibilities and resources sensibly.
- 152 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Over half the teaching observed was good or better and over a quarter was very good or better. At Key Stage 1, one excellent lesson was seen. In this lesson the teacher had very high expectations that the pupils would be able to work in a mature and sensible way in their investigation and that they would be able to think about the science in an equally mature way. These expectations were fulfilled through the skilful planning of the lesson and the clear step by step approach to the task. At Key Stage 1 teachers use language with precision, and this is a significant factor in enabling pupils to fully access the curriculum and follow the clear explanations and directions of their teachers. At both key stages, when teaching is good or better, teachers use questions skilfully to encourage pupils to think about the scientific concepts. They use pupils' answers well to develop thinking. In these classes there is very good support for individual pupils at all levels of ability. These teachers are interested and enthusiastic about science and this is highly motivating for pupils. In some satisfactory lessons, enthusiasm is less evident and the match of work to the abilities of higher and lower attaining pupils is less well focused. Throughout the school, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of science and of successful approaches to teaching it.
- 153 The curriculum planning is satisfactory and ensures appropriate coverage of all areas of the National Curriculum and a step by step approach to the development of the knowledge and understanding to be learned. However, the scheme of work is not contained in an accessible document that can be easily used for reference. The fact that the scheme is effective is due to the efforts of the coordinator, who has to very carefully monitor the planning in order to ensure that all elements of the subject are covered

appropriately. The skills of science are not fully included in the scheme although the approach used throughout the school to develop science skills is very effective. Assessment is satisfactorily carried out. The science curriculum makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, particularly when pupils become involved in environmental activities with the 'Groundwork Trust'.

154 The enthusiasm of the coordinator is a significant factor in the raising of standards in science.

156 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

156 Information technology

155 Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. This maintains the standards at the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be at least equal to other schools. All pupils use the mouse competently and they are confident to try out new things on the computer. Pupils are able to find their own programs and maximise the screen. They know how to print independently and some higher attaining pupils can choose how many copies to print. Pupils recognise that when they use a different computer sometimes the program is slightly different, for example when using a paint program. Pupils know how to create a box in which to write text when adding it to a picture. About a third of pupils are attaining at a higher level and know the vocabulary associated with computers, for example 'font', 'shift', 'caps lock'. These pupils can change the colour of the text and some can change the font to italic script.

156 At the end of Key Stage 2 an insufficient range of experiences in previous years has resulted in a level of attainment that is below national expectations. This is because, although pupils attain a satisfactory level of competence in word processing, they have not previously had the necessary range of experiences in other areas of the National Curriculum for information technology. Pupils at the end of the key stage are not familiar with data handling on the computer and or with producing graphs. They have had few opportunities to interrogate information and interpret findings. Although pupils have worked with a programmable toy at Key Stage 1, pupils have been provided with few opportunities to develop skills in control technology further at Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, pupils are very confident with word processing programs and are confident at the computer even when they are not sure what to do. They can use windows to access the program they need. They can use the tool bar to carry out the necessary procedures to produce a business card or a birthday card. They are confident when using a multi-media computer to find information. They use graphics programs successfully.

157 At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress. When pupils leave the reception class they are already confident users of the computer. They use the mouse accurately. They know how to print independently. They know that they obtain information from the computer, for example when looking at a program about the human skeleton. When pupils begin National Curriculum work in Year 1 they learn that devices respond to commands when they learn to use a programmable toy. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is not their first language, are well supported by classroom assistants and they make satisfactory progress.

158 At Key Stage 2, pupils are also making satisfactory progress. This is because the school has recently increased the number of computers available for pupils to use. A new commercially produced scheme of work has been introduced this year and this together with the enhanced resources is having a significant effect on pupils' progress. Pupils in Year 3 develop and extend their skills in using the keyboard when they practise on individual word processors using work cards from the new scheme of work. They learn to use the video camera. In Year 4, pupils learn to enter data and can enter, store and retrieve

information successfully. In Year 5, pupils practise keyboard skills and learn how to access the internet in order to find out more about aspects of the topics they are studying, such as the work of Vincent Van Gogh. Pupils at the beginning of the key stage are attaining standards in line with that expected for pupils of their age and are well on course to attain the nationally expected standard at the end of the key stage. Those currently in Year 6 are making satisfactory progress but have not yet had the necessary range of experiences to enable them to attain the standards expected of them. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, continue to be well supported and also make satisfactory progress through the key stage.

159 Pupils have good attitudes to their work in information technology. They are interested in learning more about information technology and sustain concentration when being taught new skills. They have sensible attitudes towards their work. In some lessons even when pupils are at the back of the group and have some difficulties seeing work on screen they are well behaved and interested. When waiting for their turn to use the computer they wait patiently. They are helpful to each other and understand when others make mistakes, for example when pupils in Year 2 were learning how to add text to pictures. When practising skills, pupils work conscientiously on their own. Pupils share computers amicably.

160 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged that some teachers lacked confidence. The newly introduced scheme of work has helped the less confident teachers significantly and now all teachers have the necessary competence and confidence to teach information technology. Teaching is carefully planned in every class and the subject is well organised. Teachers are clear when they give step by step instructions for pupils to follow. Teachers keep individual records of pupils' progress, and use this information well when planning future work.

161 Assessment of information technology is good. There is a good 'Quality Assurance' file containing examples of pupils' assessed work to help teachers to make informed judgements about the standards pupils are attaining. Although information technology is now well established on the timetable and used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects there are still times in the day, particularly during literacy and numeracy sessions, when computers in some classrooms are unused and therefore opportunities to develop pupils learning are being missed.

162 The subject is well managed by two coordinators; both are interested and enthusiastic about their role. With the recently improved resources and the introduction of the new scheme the school is well placed to ensure rapid improvements in standards of attainment.

164

164 **Religious education**

163 Pupils achieve standards that exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

164 At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. They think carefully about issues such as the meaning of kindness. They understand what kindness means and suggest how they might prepare for Christmas. For example, pupils think about praying for people who are ill or poor. They understand that Christmas is not just about receiving presents. They think carefully about the meaning of giving and understand that a gift need not cost any money. They are developing a good understanding of the meaning of giving. This shows a good level of understanding how people learn from religion. The pupils know that Advent is a time of preparation for Christmas. They learn about stories from the Bible and explore the feelings of Zaccheus as he waits to see Jesus. Pupils know the main Christian and Islamic festivals. They are aware of the similarities between religions. They know that the Bible is a special book for

Christians and that the Qur'an is a special book for Muslims. This is giving them a deeper knowledge of the variety of religions in their immediate community. Pupils' knowledge of some of the major world religions is good for their age.

- 165 At Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge of the six major world religions. They understand that religions give people a moral code of conduct, and know that people who have a religious belief follow their religion's code of conduct in their lives. They discuss feelings and emotions sensitively. For example, pupils in Year 3 studying the story of Christmas showed understanding of how the shepherds might have felt when the blinding light appeared. In Year 4, pupils reasoned out the significance of a Christingle celebration, and understood the symbolism of the orange, the candle and the band of ribbon around the orange. Pupils of all faiths select non material things to represent what they think is important to them and reflect quietly before they begin work. This is giving pupils a valuable insight into the similarities between religions. Pupils speak confidently about the importance of families and friends. They place value on artefacts and books connected with their religions. Work in religious education gives pupils good opportunities to explore feelings of fear, anxiety and helplessness. For example, pupils in Year 5 developed their understanding of feelings and emotions when they explored the concept of being a refugee. They related this to the story of the flight of Mary, Joseph and Jesus from Bethlehem. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how religion affects people's lives. They know about the good works of people like Dr. Barnardo, Florence Nightingale and Mother Teresa. They explore the similarities between Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils treat religious beliefs with respect. They know that Muslims do not represent human and animal life in their patterns. Pupils know that Christians, Muslims and Jews value and respect their holy books. They are developing a good understanding of the concept of giving. For example, they discussed reasons why the shepherds gave Jesus the gift of a lamb. One pupil said: *'It's because that's all they had'*. They apply these ideas to themselves and their own lives.
- 166 Pupils make effective use of information technology in their work in religious education. They use multi-media computers well to research information about religions. This has a positive impact on their knowledge. Pupils' reading and writing skills assist their work. They read aloud from the Bible with clarity and confidence and use reporting skills well to write about the Nativity.
- 167 Pupils make good progress in developing knowledge and understanding about a range of religions. In a third of lessons at Key Stage 1 and almost two thirds of lessons at Key Stage 2 pupils make very good progress. This level of progress is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils make significant gains in developing an understanding of the meaning of giving, in their understanding that religions have rules by which people live and in their understanding of religious celebrations. At Key Stage 2, pupils make very good gains in their ability to explore feelings and emotions and apply them to past events. They make good progress in their understanding of the need to care for others as well as themselves and in their understanding that many people need to believe in a supreme being. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, receive a good and effective level of support in the classroom. This enables them to make very good progress in their work.
- 168 Pupils' response to work in religious education is very good at both key stages. This represents an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils become totally absorbed and work with a clear sense of purpose. They enjoy learning about different religions and sharing each other's experiences. Pupils value and respect the ideas and opinions of others. They show much sensitivity in discussions and are confident in putting forward ideas. By age eleven pupils have an air of secure confidence as they discuss ideas and opinions. They are enthusiastic about their work and are eager to join in discussions. Pupils concentrate very well and ask sensible questions. They discuss feelings and emotions at a mature level and cooperate well together. Pupils listen attentively to adults and each other and behave very well in class. They are confident in their dealings with adults and relate well to each

other. Pupils are sensitive to the feelings, values and beliefs of other pupils.

169 The quality of teaching in religious education is good overall. At Key Stage 1, two thirds of lessons were good or better and at Key Stage 2 all lessons observed were good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers are confident in the subject and prepare their lessons thoroughly. They give careful thought to providing a suitable atmosphere in the classroom for the teaching of religious education. Teachers speak very clearly and precisely. This is particularly noticeable at Key Stage 1. Good strategies are used to ensure that pupils, particularly those with an emerging knowledge of English, have a clear understanding of the lesson and are able to follow instructions well. Lesson planning follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and gives suitable attention to the areas of learning in the syllabus. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their own experiences and to relate them to those of other people. They are sensitive to sacred religious artefacts and insist on pupils treating them with respect and care. An example of this is the placing of the Qur'an on a stand and on the highest shelf.

170 The school's scheme of work gives teachers clear guidance and suggestions to assist their teaching. It ensures that pupils learn about religions in clear progressive steps. To reinforce the curriculum, the school provides a wide range of opportunities to enable pupils to become aware of the religious element in life. Assessment and record keeping is good. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' work and their knowledge of different religions.

171 Resources for religious education are very good. The school has a very good collection of books, posters and artefacts to support work in religious education. This has a positive impact on standards. The school also makes very effective use of the loan system from the local Centre of Religious Education. Displays of pupils' work are good quality and reflect current work. The school presents work thoughtfully and with respect. The displays celebrate the good level of progress made by pupils.

173

173 **Art**

173

172 A close scrutiny of artwork in classrooms and around the school indicates that standards in art at the end of Key Stage 1 are good and are above those normally expected of seven year olds. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are very good and well above those normally expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils consolidate previously learned art skills before making good progress in a range of art skills and techniques as they move through both key stages.

173 Whilst it was not possible to observe any art lessons at Key Stage 1, examination of work in their classes indicates that the pupils soon develop good pencil and brush skills and use them to make clear, discernible portraits and pictures of their friends and families. They are introduced to simple collage work, produce some good observational drawing of flowers and vegetables and contribute to some very colourful and imaginative murals in the corridors outside their classrooms. The pupils in Year 2 produce some detailed work of figures in industrial landscapes based upon the work of L.S. Lowry. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are given the opportunity to engage in clay-work at a very early age and produce some very attractive ceramic butterflies and fish.

174 The pupils at Key Stage 2 use a range of art skills, and produce some high quality work based on the work of local, national and international artists. In Year 3, the pupils create some imaginative ancient Egyptian collars using different pasta shapes, and extend their skills in clay work as they work on models of Egyptian sarcophaguses with inlaid patterns. In Year 4, they produce some high quality tapestries and wall hangings, whilst in Year 5 pupils engage in some interesting collage work, which in turn is used in some very imaginative Christmas cards. Pupils in Year 6 can be observed exploring a single stimulus, in one particular case, a picture of a sunset, through a range of media, charcoal, crayon, paint and felt tips.

- 175 Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have equality of access to all aspects of the art curriculum and progress at the same rate as their classmates.
- 176 Observation of work around school reveals that pupils are provided with the opportunity to make good progress in their artwork through revisiting a particular style, technique, or skill, and refining it over a period of time. Thus in pottery pupils move from the production of simple plates to the creation of ceramic plaques with affixed clay patterns and then move on to some highly imaginative work based on West African masks. In painting, pupils move from a simple picture of flowers in a vase based on Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' through the creation of some delicate water colour paintings of poppies, and on to very imaginative textured paintings of flowers in vases using plastic knives, rather than brushes. In another art form pupils move from the creation of simple collage work to some very complex and beautiful low relief pictures of landscapes, using both paint and fabrics. All pupils at Key Stage 2 have a sketchbook in which to develop and refine their drawing skills. In all artwork, including painting and computerised artwork, one can see clear well-planned opportunities for pupils to make good progress in the development of a wide range of art skills and techniques.
- 177 Pupils obviously enjoy their art lessons. They stay on task and show real commitment to the activities they are involved in. This is a significant factor in the good progress made by pupils. Pupils work independently; yet support each other in their efforts. Pupils at both key stages use art materials in a safe and sensible manner, and take real pride in their finished pieces of work. A happy and active working environment was seen in all lessons observed.
- 178 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good in two thirds of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers are confident and secure in their subject knowledge, and provide pupils with a range of challenging and imaginative art activities. Lessons are always well prepared and organised. Teachers have good classroom control skills, and promote an active and motivating working atmosphere. They provide good support and advice, yet allow pupils to retain ownership of their own work. Teachers' own enthusiasm for the work in hand is a significant factor in the good progress made in lessons.
- 179 The subject is led by an experienced, well informed and enthusiastic coordinator who uses her own expertise very well to support other members of staff. There are good natural cross curricular links between art and other subjects. The links are never forced, and the focus is always on the development of skills, rather than merely servicing the subject. There is a good policy for the subject and a satisfactory scheme of work made up of teachers' medium term plans. The subject does much to contribute to the ethos and welcoming atmosphere of the school.
- 181 **Design and technology**
- 180 Very few lessons were observed because of timetabling arrangements. Evidence is drawn from scrutiny of work seen on displays, photographs, teachers' planning, records and discussions with staff and pupils.
- 181 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve standards that are above those normally expected of seven year olds and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils achieve standards that are well above those normally achieved by pupils of a similar age.
- 182 At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be close to national expectations. There have been considerable improvements since then. These are due to the systematic and progressive development of skills in all year groups and to the effective leadership provided by the co-ordinator.
- 183 Pupils' progress is good at Key Stage 1. Through a 'design and make workshop', younger pupils make well formed models using construction kits or balsa wood. They also practise their skills of making through work in food technology. They use their developing literacy skills to write their own instructions before making their product. Pupils show clear understanding of what has to be done. They

evaluate strengths and weaknesses and suggest improvements. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can generate ideas using their knowledge of materials and of the techniques involved. They select a range of tools and techniques suitable for their tasks, assemble and join materials and make judgements about the end product of their work. Good examples of the use of these skills were evident in work on the designing and making of hand puppets.

- 184 Progress over time is very good at Key Stage 2. Throughout the key stage pupils continue to develop their skills and techniques. In Year 4, a display of pupils' work shows all of the aspects of the design and technology curriculum through work in designing and planning, making and evaluating puzzles suitable for young children. The well executed work involved decoration as well as good quality construction and fixing. In Year 5, pupils make pencil holders after appraising and adapting their designs to ensure stability. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are successfully developing their skills through activities such as the production of posters to advertise Blackburn or puzzles suitable for nursery children. By Year 6, pupils are able to use their well developed skills in design and technology to make attractive jewellery boxes, based on a hexagonal prism. Pupils first evaluated their prototype design before proceeding with their work. In this outstanding lesson, pupils were observed using their mathematics skills to draw angles accurately, to dissect their hexagonal prisms and to measure precisely. All of the work is well finished and pupils are able to make critical appraisals of what they have done and seek ways to improve. Pupils at both key stages are well aware of safety procedures when using tools.
- 185 Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also make good progress in their design and technology work. They are suitably supported by staff who give appropriate help in lessons, without curtailing those pupils' developing independence in the subject.
- 186 Throughout the school, pupils make good use of their literacy skills to record, appraise their work in detail or to give instructions on making their product. Their written work shows clarity and conciseness of expression, particularly suitable for design and technology.
- 187 Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work and take pride in what they have done. They put forward ideas and suggestions thoughtfully and confidently and listen carefully to one another. A particular strength of their response is the sensitive manner in which they appraise others' work or suggest improvements. Pupils feel confident to ask their peers for ideas. Their behaviour is exemplary; pupils work well in groups, pairs or individually as required, take care of equipment and replace it in appropriate containers. The relationships between pupils and adults are excellent throughout the school.
- 188 The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2, the quality of lessons observed was never less than good; no lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. Effective planning which builds progressively on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in design and technology. The subject often supports work in other curriculum areas but it is seen as a discrete subject to ensure that pupils make consistent progress throughout the year groups. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour. As a result, standards in the school are high.
- 189 The subject is very well led by enthusiastic coordinator who has worked very hard to revise and develop it successfully throughout the school. His leadership makes a significant contribution to pupils' overall standards. The sound policy, together with a very good scheme of work provides clear guidance for teachers, and this ensures the good step by step development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Another strength of the subject is the assessment and careful evaluation of the termly projects undertaken in each year group, which are subsequently recorded systematically. The resources for the subject are good, easily accessible and well used by staff and pupils. The wide variety of displays around the school not only shows progression in the subject but also celebrates the very good work that takes place in design and technology.

191 **Geography**

- 190 As a result of the timetable structure, only a small number of geography lessons were observed during the inspection week. Judgements are based on evidence from these observations and from a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation and on discussions with teachers.
- 191 This evidence shows that all pupils, regardless of ethnicity or gender, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards normally expected at the end of both key stages.
- 192 In Year 1, early skills are developed through the use of simple geographical language such as 'next to' or 'in front of'. Work then progresses into simple comparisons of 'near and far' such as the area near to pupils' homes and an area far away. Pupils in Year 1 make simple comparisons between life in the town and life in the countryside and display a sound understanding of some of the important changes that people have made to the natural environment. Good use is made of pupils' own life experiences when they list their likes and dislikes about their immediate environment. Skills develop further in Year 2 as pupils contrast and compare their homes with houses in countries as diverse as Finland and Greece. Skills in using data are developed through simple weather records. In work closely linked to science, pupils learn about and understand some simple concepts about the weather such as the fact that wind is moving air and that rain comes from the clouds.
- 193 At Key Stage 2, a strong emphasis is placed on developing mapping skills as pupils move from class to class. At the beginning of the key stage pupils know how to identify basic features on maps by devising their own maps containing their own symbols. Some clearly understand the reason why symbols are used and all use simple 'keys' to explain them. Work is sometimes closely integrated with mathematics as pupils learn to use simple coordinates to locate places on their maps. Progress in mapping slows in Year 4 as the work that pupils do is only marginally more complex than the work in Year 3 and much of what pupils do appears to consolidate previous knowledge. Progress in Year 5 quickens as pupils begin to use less common mapping symbols and show the ability to follow directions to move around a map. By the end of the key stage, three dimensional work is developed as pupils devise their own town plans and learn to make decisions about the appropriate positioning of homes, factories and services. In studying maps of physical features, pupils become familiar with contour lines and apply their knowledge of map symbols to 'translate' the maps. The theme of man's effect on the environment, initiated at Key Stage 1, is successfully built upon as pupils compare old maps with those showing recent developments in Blackburn to track the changes that have been made. These activities involve pupils in using their skills of historical enquiry. Good links with mathematics are made as pupils use their knowledge of measurement when using scales to calculate distances.
- 194 Pupils identified as having special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language are very well supported, enjoy full access to the curriculum and progress at similar rates to their classmates.
- 195 Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they generally take a pride in what they do and try hard to present their work neatly. In the few lessons observed, all at Key Stage 2, pupils were very well behaved, very attentive and were keen to take part in the lessons by answering questions or by demonstrating their knowledge through providing explanations. In these lessons work noise was minimal as pupils focused closely on their assignments and sustained their concentration throughout the allotted time.
- 196 Within the narrow sample of lessons observed, the quality of teaching is good. Lessons were never less than good and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least sound. This is evident from their very clear explanations and their skilful use of questioning to challenge pupils to think more deeply about their work. Good techniques such as the use of timed activities are used to

sustain a good pace of learning. There are high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and good relationships between teachers and pupils. In the best lesson observed, the teacher made good use of mnemonics to help pupils to remember key facts. The short verses taught to pupils such as: *'Never Eat Shredded Wheat'* enabled pupils to accurately position the points of the compass.

197 The curriculum is satisfactory and provides an appropriate balance between the elements of National Curriculum requirements for the subject. The scheme of work is formed from teachers' detailed medium term plans. If necessary, these are modified from year to year. The potential weakness in this system is that it relies heavily on the hard work and commitment of the subject coordinator for its success. For teachers to fully understand what pupils have previously learned and what they are to go on to learn in the future, the coordinator needs to work closely with them while they are planning and to provide this overview for them. The current curriculum document lacks a clear, recorded, step by step development of pupils' skills to underpin teachers' planning and to provide teachers with a clear framework within which they can set their work. Resources are generally of good quality and are easily accessible. The subject coordinator provides satisfactory leadership.

199 **History**

198 At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress and, by the end of the key stage, achieve standards above those normally expected of seven year olds. At Key Stage 2 progress slows, but is satisfactory overall, and by the end of the key stage all pupils, regardless of gender or ethnicity, achieve standards appropriate to their age.

199 In Year 1, pupils develop a simple understanding of the passing of time, correctly using terms such as 'yesterday', 'today' and 'tomorrow'. They build on these skills by putting into the correct order the sequence of development of items such as the telephone or by correctly ordering the progression in the development of lighting from candles to modern lamps. They know basic facts about some important people in history such as Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale, and know what made these people special. In Year 2, work about famous people continues, with an increased emphasis on the day to day life of people in the past. Special events in the calendar such as November the fifth and Remembrance Day also provide a focus for study.

200 At Key Stage 2 history is studied thematically. Current studies are: Ancient Egypt in Year 3, The Romans in Year 4, The Tudors in Year 5 and The Victorians in Year 6. As they progress through Key Stage 2, pupils develop appropriate levels of skill in looking at and interpreting historical evidence. Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum. For example, English skills in writing and in using of books for reference are frequently practised, art techniques are used effectively to illustrate work and mathematical skills are needed when collating and interpreting data. Pupils have a good understanding of the period that they are studying. For example, pupils in Year 3 are fascinated by their discoveries about life in Ancient Egypt and can talk in detail about the Egyptian gods, rituals and daily life. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they not only have a satisfactory knowledge of facts about living conditions in Victorian England but they are able to use evidence such as data from the 1871 census to form hypotheses.

201 Pupils' attitudes to their work in history are good. They are often directly linked to the quality of teaching, so that in the best lessons all pupils are alert, enthused and play a very active part in all activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 quickly assumed a different role when their teacher appeared dressed as Florence Nightingale. They were so engrossed in the activity that they conversed with her as if she was the historical character. In all lessons pupils concentrate well and work sensibly, even when not directly supervised by an adult. Behaviour is always of a very high standard. Pupils take a pride in their work and try hard to present their assignments neatly.

202 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good at Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 1, and is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. At Key Stage 1 two thirds of lessons were good or better, while at Key Stage 2 three quarters of lessons were satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers plan carefully and provide well structured activities through which the level of challenge is gradually increased. Good techniques are used to bring the subject to life and the quality of day to day assessment is high. In all lessons, teachers display good subject knowledge. This is evident in the clarity of their explanations and in their enthusiasm for the work. Expectations of work and behaviour are high.

203 The curriculum is satisfactory. The school scheme of work is made up of a collection of teachers' detailed medium term plans; these sit inside an overall 'curriculum map' that sets out in very broad terms what is to be taught in each term. However, the scheme's success in providing a balance between the elements of the subject and in ensuring the satisfactory development of pupils' skills depends heavily on the work of the coordinator. She needs to ensure that planning is regularly monitored and needs to work with teachers when planning is being done to ensure that they are informed by her overview of the subject. Resources are generally of good quality and are well used. The subject coordinator provides good leadership.

205 **Music**

204 At the end of both key stages, attainment in music is above that normally expected of pupils of similar ages. The pupils make good progress in the development of musical skills and are provided with opportunities to both play and perform music, and to listen to and appraise it.

205 Pupils at Key Stage 1 regularly listen to music and develop simple appraisal skills. They are able to identify a range of instruments and talk about the mood created by their sound. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils sing a good range of songs from memory, and come to an understanding of simple graphic and symbolic notation. Their skills in performance develop well. For example, pupils in Year 1 listened to and appreciated native American music. They sang a rain song, whilst sustaining the beat of the music. In Year 2, the pupils know and sing a range of songs linked to a space theme. They demonstrate the ability to sing both quietly and loudly, when conducted by the teacher, and compare their own space songs with extracts from 'The Planet Suite' by Holst. As part of a literacy hour activity pupils devised a 'Materials Rap' and later selected appropriate untuned percussion instruments to help them with its performance.

206 As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they develop an effective musical vocabulary, and follow simple musical notation. Pupils sing a range of songs from different cultures and countries around the world. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to compose and perform music with the untuned percussion instruments in the school. These are often re-enforced by a range of brass and woodwind instruments owned by those pupils in the recorder and brass band groups. In Year 3, pupils listen to and appraise early North American folk music and compare it to Chinese music according to its pace, rhythm and choice of instruments, while in Year 4 pupils sing a range of songs and accompany themselves with glockenspiels. Older pupils in Year 5 continue to develop good singing skills, which they demonstrate when singing tunefully in two part harmony. Pupils in Year 6 sing a range of contrasting songs, including songs with two beats to the bar. The pupils demonstrate a good understanding of conventional musical notation and are able to follow a simple musical score.

207 Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have equality of access to the music curriculum and extra curricular activities and make good progress.

208 All pupils approach their work in music in a very positive manner. Pupils respond well to the opportunity to take part in practical music activities and treat all instruments in a safe and sensible manner. Pupils listen well to teachers' instructions and sustain their concentration when singing both

individually, in small groups and as a class. All this contributes to the good progress made in individual lessons.

- 209 The quality of teaching is good overall. All lessons observed at Key Stage 1 were satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good overall, with half of the lessons being good or better. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Whilst not always specialists, teachers are secure in their subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers often provide pupils with the opportunity to respond to both music attainment targets within a single lesson. Lessons are well paced and rigorous. Teachers demonstrate real personal enthusiasm for music lessons and create a motivating environment in which good learning can take place.
- 210 The subject has a good policy and an effective commercially produced scheme of work. Opportunities are provided for pupils take part in musical activities both during assemblies and at school concerts. All pupils are provided with the opportunity to join a school choir and singing group, as well as playing with a recorder group and the school's small brass band. The subject makes a good contribution to pupil's social and cultural development. Resources are generally of good quality. The subject coordinator provides good leadership.
- 212 **Physical education**
- 211 Pupils make good progress throughout the school and attainment at the end of both key stages is above that normally expected of pupils in Years 2 and 6. Although it was only possible to observe gymnastics and swimming during the period of the inspection, a close scrutiny of teachers' plans indicates that good provision is made for pupils to experience all of the required elements of the National Curriculum for physical education.
- 212 Progress at Key Stage 1 is particularly influenced by teachers' good use of praise, which impacts upon pupils' confidence to carry out work in an effective manner. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, in Year 2 physical education work is linked to a science topic as pupils explore different ways of moving around the hall in a heavy light, rough and smooth manner. They demonstrate good spatial awareness as they experiment with simple sequence of floor exercises.
- 213 Skills continue to develop well at Key Stage 2 as pupils in Year 3 devise more complex sequences of movements across low level equipment and climbing frames. By the time they reach Year 5, pupils are able to put together sequences of low level gymnastic movements in a refined manner, with a clear start and a distinct ending. Sequences of movements are further developed through dance. For example, within a single lesson, pupils in Year 6 constructed a very imaginative piece of dance based upon their work on the Victorians in history. From Year 4 pupils are provided with the opportunity to visit the local swimming baths. Non swimmers are taught by an instructor, while the class teacher focuses on the refinement of previously learned swimming skills. The large majority of pupils reach the required standard of swimming 25 metres by the end of Year 5. Those who fail to do so are provided with extra opportunities in Year 6.
- 214 As well as the good progress observed in individual lessons scrutiny of teachers' plans indicate that opportunities are provided for pupils to repeat and extend previously learned skills and use them in a different context or activity. Good provision for the subject, both in terms of a good hall and access to the local swimming pool and resources make a positive contribution to pupils' progress in the subject.
- 215 Pupils' response to physical education lessons is very good. At both key stages, pupils approach their physical education lessons in a very committed and enthusiastic manner. The pupils have very good self discipline. They listen quietly to teachers' instructions, and carry them out in a safe and sensible manner. Pupils take real pleasure in demonstrating their skills to the rest of the class, and wish to please their teachers. Pupils are aware of health and safety issues and put out and replace equipment in

a trustworthy and sensible manner.

- 216 The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. The single lesson observed at Key Stage 1 was good, while at Key Stage 2 three fifths of lessons were good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. All teachers are confident in their ability to deliver all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives being made known to pupils. Lessons are well paced, challenging and rigorous. Instructions are clear and precise, with appropriate emphasis on health and safety issues. Teachers have firm classroom control skills, and never need to resort to the use of a whistle. They make effective use of demonstration, both by themselves and with pupils in order to clarify what they have to do. Teachers use praise in an effective manner to boost pupils' confidence, and to encourage them to do even better. They use the final minutes of lessons well in order to settle pupils down and to review what they have learned.
- 217 The subject is effectively led by an enthusiastic and well informed coordinator, who has put together a useful policy for the subject. The scheme of work for physical education is sound. It is made up of teachers' detailed medium term plans. All pupils have equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum and sporting activities, with the school providing pupils with a good range of extra curricular sporting clubs and inter school competitions.

219 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

219 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 218 The school was inspected over four and a half days by a team of six inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector.
- 219 During the inspection, 25 inspector days were spent in gathering firsthand evidence. The total time spent in direct observation of lessons, sampling pupils' work and talking to pupils was 98 hours, 40 minutes.
- One hundred and eleven lessons or parts of lessons were observed;
 - Time spent in direct observation of lessons for the under fives in the nursery and the two reception classes was nine hours, 55 minutes; other time spent in other observations of learning in the under fives was two hours;
 - Time spent in direct observation of lessons at Key Stage 1 was 18 hours, 15 minutes; other time spent in observation of learning at Key Stage 1 through scrutiny of work in books and on display, plus reading interviews totalled eight hours, 55 minutes;
 - Time spent in direct observation of lessons at Key Stage 2 was 45 hours, five minutes; other time spent in observation of learning at Key Stage 2 through scrutiny of work in books and on display, plus reading interviews and interviews with pupils in some subject areas, totalled 14 hours, 30 minutes;
 - Discussions were held with pupils in all classes as part of observations, to ascertain their understanding in all areas of the curriculum;
 - The quality of pupils' reading was sampled in each year group;
 - Work completed by a sample of pupils was scrutinised;
 - Interviews were held with groups of pupils to determine their skills, knowledge and understanding in certain areas of the curriculum [e.g.: information technology];
 - Pupils' work displayed in classrooms and around school was examined;
 - Teachers were interviewed regarding their curricular and other responsibilities;
 - Registration sessions, assemblies, break times and meal times were observed;

- Test results and pupils' records were examined;
- School 'baseline' assessment data was scrutinised;
- National Curriculum test data was scrutinised;
- Teachers' planning was examined;
- Teachers' records were examined;
- Policy statements, schemes of work, financial documentation and the school development plan were scrutinised;
- Discussions were held with parents;
- Some members of the governing body were interviewed;
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were interviewed;
- Some members of the support staff [e.g. midday supervisors] were interviewed;
- The special needs coordinator and the teacher for pupils with English as an additional language were interviewed;
- A 'mother and toddlers' session was observed;
- A pre-inspection meeting was held for parents;
- The opinions of parents were also surveyed through the use of questionnaires.

· **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	409	10	105	122
Nursery Unit	29	0	4	Not applicable

· **Teachers and classes**

· **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	18.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

· **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	12
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	249

· **Qualified teachers (Nursery unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	29

· **Education support staff (Nursery unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	70
Average class size:	29.2

· **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998-99
	£
Total Income	580,954
Total Expenditure	599,381
Expenditure per pupil	1,502
Balance brought forward from previous year	125,989
Balance carried forward to next year	107,562

· **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 320
 Number of questionnaires returned: 154

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	36	58	4	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	42	55	2	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	25	62	10	2	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	31	59	8	1	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	41	48	5	5	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	40	51	5	4	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	29	62	6	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	36	53	7	4	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	37	54	8	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	44	44	10	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	61	37	0	2	0

· Figures are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.