

INSPECTION REPORT

ROE LEE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blackburn

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique reference number: 119127

Headteacher: Mrs Glenys Lees

Reporting inspector: Paul Bamber
15064

Dates of inspection: 15 -18 January 2001

Inspection number: 188678

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Emerald Avenue
Blackburn
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Brian Peacock

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

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|------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| 15064 | Paul Bamber Registered inspector | Geography History | What sort of school is it? Results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 1165 | Peter Dannheisser Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents? |
| 20368 | Sue Macintosh Team Inspector | English as an additional language | |
| 8070 | Joe Haves Team inspector | English Physical education Religious education | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 29504 | Shirley Herring Team Inspector | Areas of learning for the foundation stage Information and communication technology Art and design | |
| 28200 | Paul Stevens Team inspector | Equality of Opportunity Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology Music | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Roe Lee Park Primary School serves an area on the outskirts of Blackburn. A significant minority of pupils attending the school live in the centre of the city and travel by school bus. The pupils come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, living in a mixture of privately owned and rented property. Nearly 40 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This indicates a significant degree of social disadvantage. There are 45 children in the Nursery, who attend part-time and 47 other pupils in the Foundation Stage of their learning. There are a further 315 pupils on roll. Forty-four per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, the vast majority of Asian heritage. Forty per cent of pupils use English as an additional language, which is very high when compared nationally. There are 131 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs (well above average) and 11 of these have statements of special educational needs (above average).

Since the school's inspection in 1998, there have been several changes in staffing. The senior management team is entirely new and seven teachers have joined the school. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overall the school is effective. It is well led and managed. The school is a calm and positive community in which the achievement of all the pupils is celebrated. Most pupils receive a satisfactory standard of education but too many brighter pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, fail to reach their potential. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain high standards in music because of good teaching within a wide ranging curriculum.
- Teachers manage and care for pupils very well. As a result pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their learning.
- The provision made by the school for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The way in which the school encourages pupils to respect the values and beliefs of all contributes significantly to the high level of racial harmony.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide clear and sensitive leadership which promotes high morale and effective teamwork.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics are too low throughout the school.
- Too many pupils fail to understand what they read.
- In many lessons brighter pupils are insufficiently challenged.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1998. Standards have risen in English and information and communication technology throughout the school. The quality of leadership and management is much better. Behaviour and attitudes have improved. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved, the induction of new teachers is much better and pupils' health and safety is now assured. There has been little improvement in standards in mathematics and brighter pupils are still not fully challenged.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 |
| English | D | E | D | B |
| mathematics | B | E | E | D |
| science | B | E | D | C |

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

The information shows that compared with all schools the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels or above, was below the national average in English and science and well below in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in English, average in science but below average in mathematics. The percentage of pupils achieving standards higher than those expected was well below the national average in all three subjects but above the average for similar schools.

Standards over the last three years have fluctuated according to the average abilities of individual year groups but have generally remained below national averages. The significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is likely to lower average standards. This was the case last year when nearly 40 per cent of pupils in Year 6 fell into this category. There are indications that the school's efforts to drive literacy standards up are succeeding.

The findings of the inspection are that in the present Year 6 standards are just below average in English and science but well below average in mathematics. This reflects some unsatisfactory teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards in information and communication technology are below average despite recent improvements in teaching and provision. In music, standards are high and in all other subjects of the National Curriculum pupils attain standards in line with the national expectation for 11 year olds. Standards in literacy are about average but too low in numeracy. Boys outperform girls and worryingly the girls' average performance has declined over the last three years. There are many more girls than average with special educational needs. Asian boys make up a significant proportion of the higher attaining pupils. The school has set realistic targets for improvement in attainment in mathematics for 2001, but given the 2000 results these targets are not that challenging in English. The school's targets for 2002 are very challenging. Standards in Year 2 are below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. This is not surprising as 50 per cent of pupils have special educational needs and those pupils, many of whom use English as an additional language, have not yet mastered enough basic English to attain expected standards. Standards in all other subjects are similar to those found in other schools.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have very good attitudes to lessons, they are keen to learn and work hard. They enjoy school. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good in lessons and in the playground at break and lunchtimes. |
| Personal development and relationships | Pupils relate very well together. A particular strength is the respect they have for each other's cultures, values and beliefs resulting in close racial harmony. There is little evidence of any bullying. |
| Attendance | Unsatisfactory. Attendance rates are below average. Pupils who travel in |

| | |
|--|--|
| | the school bus are habitually late which disrupts the start of the school day. |
|--|--|

Pupils have good concentration and take delight in the rewards for good work, effort or behaviour. There have been few exclusions and pupils behave sensibly. They enjoy taking responsibility in assemblies and for the school library. A real strength of the school is the excellent relationships between pupils from different backgrounds and ethnic groups.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Of the 67 lessons observed 95 per cent were at least satisfactory, 15 per cent very good and 37 per cent good, with 5 per cent unsatisfactory. In the Nursery teaching is consistently good. The main strengths in the teaching throughout the school include good behaviour management resulting in generally well-ordered lessons and good deployment of support staff. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language. Weaknesses are in the teaching of numeracy and in a failure to extend brighter pupils. The teaching of literacy is good and this is a major factor in the improvements in standards in English and in writing particularly. At both key stages the quality of teaching and learning is good in music and information and communication technology. It is satisfactory in all other subjects at both key stages. Particular strengths in pupils' learning are their interest in their lessons, their concentration and independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Planning for mixed age classes does not sufficiently meet the needs of the brighter pupils. The range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils is very good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Support is effective and well managed. Individual Education Plans contain targets which ensure that the pupils make good progress. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Good. The bi-lingual support given to these pupils enhances their understanding of lessons and ensures their full inclusion in the life of the school. Many make good progress by the time they leave the school. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. The school successfully encourages pupils' social skills, has a strong moral code and is very effective in promoting pupils' cultural and spiritual development. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Procedures for child protection and for pupils' welfare are good. The school's rewards and sanctions system is effective in ensuring good behaviour. |

The school makes good links with parents, who have a very positive view of the school. Despite the best efforts of the school, few parents involve themselves directly in its work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides clear and sensitive leadership which promotes confidence in the staff. The deputy headteacher has played a key role in promoting good behaviour and in raising pupils' self esteem. The leadership and management of subjects is satisfactory overall, with strengths in music, but weaknesses in mathematics. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. Some governors are involved directly in the day-to-day work of the school and have a specific role in overseeing the provision for literacy and special educational needs. Governors participate in school development planning and in the analysis of the school's performance. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory overall. Many improvements in tracking pupils' progress have taken place and analysis of test results has resulted in improvements in standards in English. However, too little has been done to improve standards in numeracy. |
| The strategic use of resources | Overall, the school uses funds and resources well. Financial control is rigorous. Value for money is sought in all aspects of spending. Grants to support pupils using English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are used effectively to ensure their inclusion in all aspects of school life. |

The schools' staffing, accommodation and learning resources adequately support the work of the school. Overall, the school's leadership and management is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching is good. • The parents feel comfortable approaching the school with concerns. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children should have the right amount of homework each week. |

Inspectors concur with the positive views of the parents. The school has informed parents of its expectations of the amount of homework it expects the pupils to be set and with a few exceptions, teachers meet this expectation. Some of the parents were concerned that they received insufficient information about their children's progress. Inspectors found that the school provides information about progress as frequently as most other schools and that the parents were welcome to talk informally about their children's progress at any time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in the year 2000, the percentage of pupils attaining at the national expectation or above was below average in English and science and well below the average in mathematics. Compared with national averages the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level for their age was above the average in English and in line with the average in mathematics and science. However, the percentage of pupils attaining at the higher levels was lower than average in English and science and significantly lower in mathematics. Much of the below average performance may be explained by the high number of pupils who had significant special educational needs in Year 6 last year. This would tend to lower average standards. When compared to the average performance of schools with similar intakes, standards were above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics.
2. Over the period 1996-2000, the school's rate of improvement at Key Stage 2 has been below that found nationally. The improvement has been best in English and worst in mathematics. Until recently the school had not taken sufficient steps to improve standards in mathematics. Over this same period the improvement in girls' performance has been much slower than boys. Girls of Asian heritage have performed least well. The school is aware of this and is monitoring the provision for all girls and Asian heritage girls particularly, with a view to improving their attainment in mathematics. Asian boys represent a significant proportion of the higher attaining pupils.
3. The school has set realistic targets for the percentage of pupils who should attain the expected level for their age or above in 2001 national tests in English and mathematics. Despite being lower than the local education authority judged appropriate, they will represent a challenge given the average attainment in the present Year 6. The targets set for the present Year 5 are challenging and reflect the higher average attainment of this year group.
4. The findings of this inspection are that in the present Year 6, pupils attain standards just below average in English and science and well below average standards in mathematics. This reflects the school's drive to raise the pupils' attainment in English, especially in writing. Considering the much higher than average proportion of pupils with significant special educational needs, around 40 per cent in Year 6, pupils' achievements in English and science are at least satisfactory. This is not the case in mathematics, in which standards are too low because teachers fail to challenge pupils enough. Standards in literacy and numeracy reflect overall standards in English and mathematics. In other subjects, Year 6 pupils achieve standards above the national expectation in music, which is a strength of the school, and below that expectation in information and communication technology. Despite recent, good improvements in pupils' attainment in information and communication technology they have not been sufficient to raise the Year 6 standards to expected levels. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education pupils attain expected standards by the time they leave the school. Compared with the inspection findings in 1996, standards have remained high in music and have improved in writing, religious education and information and communication technology.
5. In the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and assessments for 2000, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level for their age, or above, was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments indicate that standards were below the national average in science.
6. Over the period 1996-2000, the school's results have improved at a slower rate than that nationally. Significantly, girls' average attainment in all three subjects has worsened. There was no evidence during the inspection of factors within teaching or the provision, which would explain this

trend. A far higher percentage of girls in the school have special educational needs than is the national norm and this will tend to lower the average standards that girls attain. Girls of Asian heritage achieve lower standards, on average, than all the other pupils. The school is aware of this and as part of its monitoring process has focussed upon this issue and is continuing to do so. These trends reflect differences in the pupils' attainment when they enter full time education.

7. The findings of the inspection are that the proportion of pupils in the present Year 2 attaining at the nationally expected level for their age, is below average in reading, writing and science and well below average in mathematics. On average, pupils enter the school with poor speaking skills and this tends to lower average standards in English in Key Stage 1. In music, pupils attain standards that are higher than the national expectation. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum, pupils attain standards in line with expectations. In relation to previous inspections, standards have risen in reading and writing, information and communication technology, geography and religious education. They have fallen in mathematics and been maintained in all other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Average standards in core subjects tend to be low because in Year 2 at present, 50 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs and there is a high proportion of pupils who use English as an additional language. The effect of this on average standards has already been explained in this section of the report.

8. Pupils make significant progress in improving their reading and writing as they move through Key Stage 2. By the time they leave most read accurately, but too many fail to interpret what they read. They write imaginatively in subjects such as history and geography. Higher attaining pupils talk confidently about their favourite authors and characters. A strength is in pupils' ability to use a book's index, contents page or glossary to find information quickly. A relative weakness is that pupils do not write for a wide enough variety of purposes. At Key Stage 1, too many pupils fail to understand enough of what they read and this restricts their attainment in problem solving in mathematics and in scientific investigations. A further weakness at this key stage is pupils' inability to spell or punctuate accurately. The school is aware of these weaknesses and acknowledges that many pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to read or discuss what they read to an adult. Throughout the school, pupils listen attentively and this makes a good contribution to their understanding in all lessons. However, pupils' vocabulary is limited and many are unable to express themselves clearly.

9. There are significant weaknesses in pupils' standards in mathematics at both key stages and they do not make enough progress. Pupils have relative strengths in their number work, for instance, in using several strategies to long multiply. Too many weaknesses are evident in their ability to recognise mathematical language, pattern in number and shape or to measure accurately. These weaknesses, together with their too low standards in interpreting data are consistent throughout the school. A contributing factor to pupils' low standards is the lack of pace and challenge evident in many numeracy lessons.

10. Strengths in pupils' standards in science at Key Stage 2 include their understanding of forces and gravity and in determining what might affect the fairness of a test. They have a relative weakness in analysing and interpreting their test results. At Key Stage 1, strengths are in testing materials for different purposes and in their understanding of life processes but brighter pupils do not attain high enough standards, for instance, in their knowledge of electricity. Too few pupils reach expected standards when carrying out scientific investigations. Weaknesses in the teaching of the science curriculum contribute to the low standards brighter pupils attain.

11. In art, pupils' strengths are in observational drawing at both key stages. At Key Stage 2, pupils show an above average appreciation of Asian patterns and have strengths in three-dimensional collage work.

12. Strengths in pupils work in design and technology at Key Stage 2 are in making moving models but they are weaker in evaluating and amending their designs. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in puppet making and in their knowledge of foods traditional to a range of ethnic groups.

13. In geography, 11 year olds attain good standards in their use of map keys and symbols and argue convincingly about environmental issues. At Key Stage 1, pupils show good understanding of the use to which local buildings are put and of local routes. At both key stages, however, the geographical skills of the brighter pupils are not fully promoted.
14. Pupils make good progress in developing a sense of chronology by studying family trees in Key Stage 1 and sequentially dating the major events of World War 2 in Key Stage 2. Younger pupils talk knowledgeably about Guy Fawkes and older pupils attain good standards when they identify bias and interpretation in historical evidence.
15. Although overall standards in Year 6 are below average in information and communication technology, in other year groups standards are in line with national expectations. Such has been the backlog of underachievement over time, that the recent improvements in teaching and provision have been insufficient to enable Year 6 pupils to 'catch up' to expected levels. The oldest pupils use text and graphics programs competently and compile simple spreadsheets. They have weaknesses in their ability to test and control, using the computer. Younger pupils confidently use icons and tool bars to move objects around the screen or call up elements of programs. Pupils with special educational needs reinforce their number work well using mathematical programs.
16. Pupils attain increasingly high standards in singing as they move through the school. By the age of 11 they sing with good intonation and in close harmony, building on the good start they receive in Key Stage 1. At this key stage they sing in tune remembering the words of many songs. Pupils also make good progress in playing instruments so that by the time they leave the school, a significant proportion perform in front of an audience in assemblies or in the wider community. Such high standards result from very good provision and high quality teaching.
17. Within the average standards pupils achieve in physical education, they have strengths in ball skills at Key Stage 1 and develop their gymnastics skills well as they progress through Key Stage 2. A high proportion of the pupils attain the nationally expected standards in swimming by the time they leave the school.
18. In religious education, at both key stages pupils' awareness of the rituals and tenets of world faiths is a strength in the standards they achieve. Teachers sensitively encourage pupils who worship in different faiths to share their knowledge and experiences to promote these standards. The pupils' limitations in reading or writing at Key Stage 1 slow their progress in recording their knowledge or in interpreting religious stories.
19. Children enter the Foundation Stage of their education with below average attainment in all aspects of their learning. Those who start in the Nursery make good progress and throughout the Foundation Stage children make good progress in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. This is a result of good teaching and intensive support. Children make satisfactory progress in all other areas of their learning but because they start at a low level a majority are unlikely to attain, by the age of five, the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals. Particular strengths in their learning are in their ability to relate well to adults and each other and to take turns and share resources. They count to five and back, form letters and understand the way in which books are laid out. They know they need a healthy diet, run, jump and balance with good control and sing in tune with good rhythm. Relative weaknesses include underdeveloped speaking skills, a lack of knowledge of mathematical vocabulary, an inability to manipulate scissors adeptly or to paste accurately and limited ability to use 'junk' modelling and in three dimensions. These relative weaknesses are associated with a lack of provision.
20. Pupils with special educational needs, including those for whom a statement of special educational needs exists, make good progress as they move through the school. They work successfully to meet the targets set for them in their individual education plans and work confidently as a result of the good support they receive from well trained teaching assistants. Their progress is most marked in literacy in which lessons they are supported well. They are clearly motivated to achieve success in relation to the small steps they take in their learning.

21. Pupils who use English as an additional language make good progress overall, especially in Key Stage 2 and particularly boys. The girls achieve less well than boys in national tests. In some year groups, two-thirds of the pupils are boys, so there are few girls who use English as an additional language in some classes. The school is aware of girls' underachievement and applies strategies in class to focus on girls, particularly by asking them specific questions which encourages them to contribute more. Where this occurs, it is successful in increasing girls' greater participation. In addition, a group of girls is specifically invited to attend the weekly library club to increase their confidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

22. Ninety-five per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire sent to them before the inspection confirmed that their children enjoyed coming to school. The pupils confirm they like the school.

23. Attendance figures are below the national averages for primary schools. Those pupils who travel on the school bus are often late. As a result, the start of school is often disrupted. Registers are completed twice a day and procedures meet legal requirements. Pupils are polite and attentive during registrations. The school refers serious concerns about attendance to the educational welfare office but at present, only an emergency service is available. The school may not follow up an unexplained absence for several days.

24. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and behave well. This is a strength of the school. Pupils learn quickly how to relate well to each other. In the playgrounds they co-operate in games, although without any play equipment, play is limited in scope. There is no quiet area outdoors but several pupils may spend lunch breaks indoors or use the library facility. Pupils are friendly, helpful to visitors and generally considerate. They respect one another. For example, they quietly wait their turn to go into lunch, collect their meal and they are considerate when they move from their classrooms to other parts of the building. The pupils' deep respect for the beliefs and values of those who worship in different faiths or come from different backgrounds is a great strength of the school and promotes close racial harmony. No incidences of bullying were observed during the inspection.

25. In assemblies, pupils are attentive. They listen and take part eagerly in the weekly class assembly, enjoyed by pupils, visitors and many parents. Pupils are courteous and carefully move around the classroom. In the majority of lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and have the ability to co-operate and collaborate when they are set appropriate work. They respond well to their teachers' expectations for good manners and are encouraged to contribute. For example, in a lesson on pupils' family trees, six and seven year olds listened carefully and enthusiastically compiled their own diagrams. Eleven year olds also work well, for example, with quiet purposefulness in a mathematics lesson and respond well to their teacher and support staff.

26. Pupils with special educational needs are keen to learn both in the classroom and during the special sessions outside the classroom. Within the classroom they frequently benefit from specialist help and successful teaching strategies and extra guidance from teaching assistants. An adequate number of adults support the pupils and ensure that interest and challenge is maintained and attitudes to work are wholly positive for the majority of pupils.

27. The many pupils who use English as an additional language have good attitudes to their learning. Many contribute significantly to other pupils' understanding of their own culture and faith. They work enthusiastically and conscientiously to improve their attainment and to achieve the best they can.

28. Pupils are enthusiastic, especially when they are encouraged to take part in active learning

such as in a music lesson. When the positive behaviour policy is consistently applied, pupils respond well and are confident and reliable.

29. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. This is evident both in classrooms and around the school. Pupils relate well and show respect for each other and for their teachers. Pupils mostly show a genuine eagerness to take an active part in most lessons, and to show their work to visitors. Pupils are confident, happy and able to work well with each other and take the presence of visitors in their stride.

30. Pupils trust their teachers and they know to whom they should go if there is a problem. They are given responsibility as they go through the school and enjoy helping, clearing up, delivering registers and volunteer to do a number of useful jobs around the school. Some older pupils take great pleasure in helping the youngest ones at playtime.

31. Pupils are enthusiastic about school clubs and activities and have successfully taken part in a wide range of competitions and events for charity. They very much enjoy and benefit from visits in the locality and to London, and residential visits.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

32. Overall, throughout the school, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The quality of teaching varies between very good and unsatisfactory. Of the 67 lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was very good in 10, good in 25, satisfactory in 29 and in three lessons unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is similar to that of the school's previous inspection, but there is now less unsatisfactory teaching.

33. The quality of teaching and learning in English, including literacy, is good at both key stages. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make in their acquisition of language skills as they move through the school. However, the teaching of mathematics, including numeracy is unsatisfactory. Despite the fact that teachers follow the National Numeracy Strategy, too many fail to inject sufficient pace into their teaching nor do they set hard enough work for the brighter pupils. This results in standards in mathematics being too low throughout the school and this is a significant weakness.

34. The quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is good in music and information and communication technology. For the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum, including religious education, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

35. The support and encouragement provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils who use English as an additional language are strengths throughout the school. Teachers plan well to cater for pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants work closely with them, so that programmes for individual pupils are relevant to their needs. To assist them in this, they have detailed plans that have been agreed with teachers. The quality of teaching where pupils are withdrawn from lessons is very good. Pupils progressively learn literacy skills and then how to apply them in their reading and writing. Teachers have a very good rapport with pupils and promote their confidence by talking with them in small groups.

36. Two specialist teachers and two bilingual support assistants work effectively in class targeting groups of pupils who use English as an additional language. In Years 5 and 6 literacy lessons, the 'Ethnic Minority Achievement' teacher and two class teachers plan lessons together, to help them to focus on pupils who use English as an additional language in their class, particularly those who are underachieving. The thorough planning provides pupils with opportunities to improve the scope of their written work, by extending their knowledge of language structure and vocabulary. Activities for groups of pupils are well matched to their ability, and to the particular needs. As a

result pupils work hard, respond well to their teachers and show increasing understanding and confidence in their writing. The teacher in Year 2 works effectively with groups of pupils targeted for additional support. The bilingual support assistants, working with younger children, are very effective because they have a good knowledge of the language and learning needs of these pupils and are guided well by the class teacher. They use the children's first language to explain any unfamiliar vocabulary and ideas. For example, when they build a profile of an Ugly Sister in Cinderella. This encourages the children they support in class to show and tell other pupils what they achieve and learn, and to relate the stories they have been told in their first language.

37. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is often good in the Nursery. Strengths include good teaching of the children's communication, language and literacy skills and for their personal, social and emotional development. Staff are particularly good at promoting the youngest children's good behaviour and they establish a sense of fun and challenge in many activities. This enthuses the children and makes them eager to learn, especially in their use of language and when using computers. Relative weaknesses in teaching, at this stage occur when teachers fail to provide children with a focus for some of their activities. For example, with sand and water play, learning objectives are less clear when the children choose their own activities. There are also weaknesses in the limited range of art activities offered to the children.

38. In the good lessons observed in both Key Stages 1 and 2, the relationship between teachers and pupils and the handling of the pupils' behaviour are major strengths. This encourages pupils to listen carefully to both instructions and explanations and to the responses of classmates. As a result, pupils settle to work promptly in a calm, positive atmosphere. A particular strength of pupils' learning is the way in which they listen to and learn from each other. In a Year 4 class assembly, all the pupils listened raptly to several Muslim pupils describing their way of prayer and the special clothing they wear during religious worship. Many were clearly fascinated, questioned keenly and were eager for the session to continue. The teacher's very positive handling of this session promoted high quality learning. The teaching of information and communication technology is good throughout the school. It is characterised by good planning and focused lessons in which time is used well to promote a fast pace of learning. As a result, standards are improving, particularly amongst younger pupils. Music is taught well by an enthusiastic teacher with a high level of subject expertise. The teaching of singing is particularly strong. She has encouraged a significant minority of pupils to have instrumental tuition and they confidently play in school assemblies. Teachers' liaison, joint planning and the deployment of support staff are strengths and are particularly effective in the support for pupils who need more confidence to speak in front of the class.

39. There are two main factors which contribute to weaknesses in teaching and learning or parts of lessons in which this is less effective. A major weakness is that too many teachers expect too little of the brightest pupils. As a result they do not achieve what they should, particularly in mathematics. This is reflected in the low proportion of pupils who achieve higher levels in national tests at Key Stage 1 and to a lesser extent at Key Stage 2. In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers teach the same lesson to two age groups in order to cater for the mixed age classes. Whilst this ensures that pupils do not repeat work in successive years, teachers fail to set work at different levels to ensure that the older, brighter pupils develop their skills appropriately. This means that in subjects such as art and design and design and technology, the quality of learning is not satisfactory for all pupils.

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

40. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced, overall. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. The school meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There is good provision for personal, social and health education. All statutory requirements are met.

41. There is a strong emphasis in the time allocations for English, mathematics and science. Curricular provision is satisfactory overall in English and science, with good procedures in place to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. In English, there is a clear focus on improving writing. In mathematics, provision is just satisfactory. There are some weaknesses in Key Stage 2, where there is imbalance between different aspects of the subject. Provision in music is very good. Whilst overall curricular planning has improved in recent years, the planning for the mixed age classes does not take sufficient account of the needs of the older, brighter pupils. This was a key issue from the previous inspection and remains a concern.

42. The development of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall with strengths in writing but some weaknesses in reading. Pupils are encouraged to write accurately and imaginatively, using literacy skills, in a number of subjects. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to read with adults and as a result too many fail to fully understand what they read. Information and communication technology skills are used to encourage extended writing, for example, to provide information for science displays.

43. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is an adequate number of suitably qualified staff, and the school ensures that teachers and assistants are well trained to support pupils. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the daily literacy hour meets pupils' needs. This is not the case for the National Numeracy Strategy and as a result pupils attain standards that are too low. The school works closely with outside agencies to ensure that pupils' progress is regularly reviewed and that appropriate support is provided. Withdrawal from classrooms is planned carefully, so that skills pupils learn are relevant to their class lessons. The school successfully encourages pupils with special educational needs to take part in a wide variety of clubs.

44. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities. Sport is well represented, with pupils involved in inter-school cricket, rugby and soccer. In addition, pupils take part in the local schools' cross-country championships. There are clubs to promote pupils' interest in gardening and reading. The school has a high reputation for music provision and a range of instrumental tuition is available, for example, violin and keyboard.

45. The school allocates a significant amount of time to personal, social and health education. This includes drugs awareness and an appropriate sex education policy is in place. Pupils discuss these issues in science and personal, social and health education lessons.

46. The local community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. For example, there is good support provided by the local football team, Blackburn Rovers, through their provision of a study support centre. The school is now involved in a local out-of-hours club for pupils and uses local swimming baths as part of the physical education provision.

47. There are good links with other educational institutions. The school has its own Nursery on site. During the summer holiday older pupils attend a local high school's 'Summer Literacy and Numeracy School.' There are good links with Blackburn College which includes the provision of the information and communication technology suite for parents to follow a course run by the college. The school is involved in the 'graduate teacher training scheme.' The school is a centre of excellence for music and provides opportunities for neighbouring schools to benefit from this facility. Overall, there are a number of improvements in curricular provision since the previous inspection.

48. The school makes very good provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. This is a strength of the school and a significant improvement from the previous inspection.

49. Recently arrived pupils, new to English, have a few minutes' individual support in their first language each day with a bilingual support assistant, as well as one lesson a week, which contributes to their good progress. Younger children regularly have the opportunity to hear stories

in their first language, which are read by the bilingual support assistants. They, and the children, alike really enjoy and look forward to this activity.

50. The overall quality of assemblies is good, with a number being very good. They are well organised and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness. Their content is carefully balanced to enable pupils from all backgrounds to be involved. All assemblies make an effective link between everyday concerns, such as relationships, with a spiritual dimension. For example, an assembly about caring for others included reflection upon relationships within school and a related prayer. Very good use is made of stories containing important messages and music helps set a reflective tone. One class assembly used poetry effectively. In another, the teacher drew pupils' attention to the bright sunlight, as a contrast to recent rain. A sense of awe was generated by a beautifully carved elephant and then supported by a story containing a clear message. Through the curriculum and in display, a spiritual dimension is developed. For example, posters of the solar system helps pupils develop their awareness of the vastness of the universe.

51. The school clearly emphasises the difference between right and wrong. Clear guidelines exist for behaviour throughout the school. These include classroom, corridor and lunchtime codes of conduct. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to adopt positive attitudes towards behaviour and a respect for one another. The staff provide good examples to pupils and are good role models. Assembly themes have a clear moral message. Pupils have many opportunities to respond positively to these, for example, identifying good playground conduct.

52. Pupils are expected and encouraged to act in a responsible manner. They are appointed as monitors in classrooms, the office and library. They receive appropriate training and support. Older pupils are encouraged to play and help supervise the younger ones. Pupils are actively involved in charitable fundraising, at times taking significant responsibility. Pupils recently organised a 'bring and buy stall' to raise funds for a local appeal. National and local charities are regularly supported. In assemblies, pupils take charge of the overhead projector and music centre. The school encourages pupils to celebrate their achievements, through awards in assembly. The residential visit to the Robin Wood Activity Centre provides good opportunities to develop a sense of independence and co-operation.

53. The school ensures that pupils have many opportunities to understand their cultural heritage and the nature of a multi-cultural society. Personal, social and health education provision is strong and a significant amount of curriculum time is given to it. Pupils have numerous opportunities to appreciate art, music and drama. They attend public performances, such as concerts given by The Halle Orchestra, and many pupils are actively involved as performers. A theatre group and musicians have performed in the school. The school is successful when it helps pupils' improve their understanding of a multi-cultural society. It celebrates the main religious festivals of different faiths, such as Easter and Eid. It is sensitive to the needs of pupils observing Ramadan. In some lessons, pupils share their knowledge and help one another, for example, to explain a specific religious belief. Differing groups within the local community are represented on the staff or as governors. There is a good range of multi-lingual resources and some display around the school to celebrate differing cultures, for example, Italian food. The Internet is used effectively to investigate non-European societies, for example, Kenya.

54. The impact of this very good provision is seen in the positive attitudes and behaviour of all pupils and their good relationships with staff. Pupils are respectful and tolerant of one another's beliefs and cultural heritage and have an interest in learning from one another.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

55. The staff and governing body contribute to the provision of a very caring school in which the personal needs of the pupils are met well. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and are given appropriate support when they are targeted for extra help – usually within the classroom. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Bilingual support assistants help to give confidence to pupils with English as an additional language. As well as English, they have knowledge of two of the most common languages known to pupils and help to raise the level of understanding of English, especially for the younger pupils.

56. There is a positive atmosphere and the teachers know their pupils well. Parents and pupils say that staff are kind and supportive. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully monitored. The school records any behaviour problems and tracks pupils having special difficulties in this respect, working closely with parents to support their children. There have been no recent permanent exclusions, and exclusion for a fixed number of days occurs very rarely and governors are fully consulted. Certificates and other special awards are given to pupils at Friday assemblies. Pupils' efforts contribute to a weekly team award and their good attendance is recognised each term. Pupils are clearly motivated as a result of these procedures and respond by striving to do their best. The school has plans to start a weekly award for the class with the best attendance record and to encourage better attendance.

57. The school conscientiously maintains the special educational needs register. Teachers develop very appropriate Individual Education Plans in conjunction with the special educational needs co-ordinator and continuously review pupils' progress towards their targets. It has been recently recognised that these targets will often need to include some related to numeracy and some to personal and social development. Teachers ensure that pupils receive recognition for their achievements, through direct praise. This encourages pupils to build on their successful learning.

58. The school monitors attendance well and works with personnel from the local education authority when necessary. Most absences are accounted for and authorised. Some pupils take extended holidays in term time. These are always discussed with the headteacher in advance, and pupils are encouraged to use the opportunity to collect information and keep a diary for their return. The school follows-up the few unexplained absences - but after a week. Registers are well kept and meet requirements. Persistent lateness is followed up by a letter home and as a result the punctuality of those pupils who do not travel on the school bus has improved.

59. There are opportunities for pupils to discuss feelings, attitudes and behaviour with each other through work in personal social and health education lessons and also during class and school assemblies and in science sessions when the curriculum covers issues of health and safety, drugs, cleanliness and relationships.

60. Pupils have other experiences to help them mature into responsible and caring individuals and the majority of parents who responded to a questionnaire felt this was a strength of the school. These include religious education, visits to many places of interest including a residential visit to a nature centre. There are plenty of clubs run at lunch times and after school to help develop pupils' interests and self-reliance.

61. Pupils develop an understanding and respect for other peoples' beliefs and customs and are introduced to a multi-cultural range of music and art. They recognise a range of religious celebrations and contribute to a number of charities.

62. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying or harassment are very successful. And as a result pupils behave sensibly and responsibly. Strategies to help pupils participate to their best ability are usually successful. Pupils help create class and playground rules. Together with better supervision on the playground these rules have resulted in improved behaviour at break and lunchtime. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Most staff concentrate on reinforcing success. There are special assemblies where pupils celebrate each other's achievements. The staff are fully aware of child protection procedures and the headteacher, as the nominated person, takes part in local meetings and keeps

colleagues fully informed. The midday meal supervisors know pupils well and meet staff regularly to become better informed about the needs of specific pupils.

63. There are sufficient members of staff trained in first aid. Pupils with physical impairment are well cared for and staff are careful to acknowledge pupils' needs or abilities without drawing general attention to them. There are regular checks on the safety of portable electrical appliances, fire extinguishers and other equipment.

64. The premises provide a clean and pleasant environment that is respected by the staff and pupils alike. Displays enliven the school and are well maintained. Staff take good care of their pupils and ensure they are sensible and safe. The school and site are very well maintained. School governors take an active role in regularly monitoring health and safety and security issues which are formally recorded. They have sought advice from relevant experts and acted promptly on recommendations to ensure the site and procedures conform to the high standards of health and safety.

65. Procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. The school makes full use of a broad assessment of pupils when they begin their education, so that teachers know how well they have progressed in their learning by the time they are seven. The school has realised that personal and academic development are strongly related. This has been very helpful in identifying the whole range of special educational needs at an early stage. The school works closely with parents when it identifies that an individual pupil has significant special educational needs. The provision for those pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need is good and this promotes their good progress.

66. The school closely monitors pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. It has used this information well to identify how to improve pupils' writing. However, it is only very recently that the analysis of pupils' weaknesses in mathematics is being acted upon. It employs a variety of tests as well as the statutory and voluntary standard attainment tasks to assess pupils' learning. The school analyses the results to see if there are any trends by comparing the results of different groups of pupils. Areas of weakness in science, for example, are identified in this way. It also focuses on individual pupils by giving them targets in English and mathematics, which they keep for reference in their exercise books. The school regularly assesses pupils with special educational needs. Where necessary, it produces Individual Education Plans to provide targets specifically related to pupils' particular problems. The school works well with parents, who respond by working co-operatively with teachers to review their children's progress.

67. The school is introducing formal systems of assessment in music and information and communication technology. The school has yet to develop portfolios of assessed examples of pupils' work in different subjects to help teachers to know how well pupils are progressing in all subjects. School-home reading records are being improved to include more analysis of pupils' reading attainment. Whilst there is a policy for marking pupils' work, daily assessment is inconsistent. Some pupils' books contain very helpful advice and praise, while others receive minimal attention. Consequently some pupils either do not learn from their own mistakes or do not receive confirmation of their success.

68. The 'Ethnic Minority Achievement' teacher analyses the school's test data in English to identify whether pupils from different ethnic groups achieve differently to other pupils in the school. As a result, aspects of reading and writing are highlighted for development. Pupils with English as an additional language who underachieve in literacy are targeted for support in Years 5 and 6, so that they achieve the national average by the end of Year 6. Their progress is closely and regularly monitored, targets reviewed and updated and an expected level is predicted for the end of the year. In the marking of pupils' work the teacher's comments offer encouragement and guidance, to help pupils make progress and meet their targets. In Key Stage 1, the 'Ethnic Minority Achievement' teacher, working with Year 2 pupils, uses assessments made of the pupils' progress since starting school. In discussion with class teachers, it is decided which pupils, with English as an additional

language, to target for additional support, for example, to improve their understanding and reading. The two bilingual support assistants work in Year 1, Reception and Nursery. They speak the languages spoken by the majority of the Asian heritage pupils at the school, Gujarati, Panjabi and Urdu. Their planning for work in class is fully incorporated into the lesson plan by the class teacher. The bilingual support assistants make a written assessment of each child's progress during the lesson to enable the teacher to plan further activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

69. Parents who responded to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection were positive about the school. They appreciate what the school has achieved and agree that the school works closely with parents. It encourages parents to discuss issues, come to meetings, celebrations and class assemblies, and to contribute in many ways. Ninety-six per cent of parents say that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem or suggestion and 87 per cent say they feel the school works closely with parents.

70. Parents feel that the headteacher and all staff are approachable and that this aspect of the school has improved in recent years. However, parental involvement in classes has remained low since the previous inspection. There is close contact prior to children attending the Nursery, when teachers visit enrolled pupils in their own homes. Parents are invited to attend special events such as workshops about numeracy and literacy. A large proportion of parents come to the three meetings each year to discuss their children's progress with the teachers. During the inspection, a large number of parents came to a class assembly and were clearly delighted to share in their children's' success. Parents are supportive of their children's participation in clubs and in musical activities.

71. The school works closely with parents of pupils with special educational needs. It successfully encourages them to attend progress reviews so pupils benefit from co-operation between home and school. As well as holding more formal meetings, the school provides opportunities for immediate informal contact. Where there is a very serious problem, the special educational needs co-ordinator sets up continuous communication with parents.

72. The bilingual support assistants fulfil a role beyond the classroom when they help make parents of pupils with Asian heritage feel welcome in the school. Where they share a language with parents, they accompany the Reception teacher on home visits at the beginning of the summer term before the children are admitted. They are available on parents' evenings and other events held to involve and inform parents in their children's education. There is very effective co-operation between the school and parents over extended holidays, such as to visit relatives overseas, or to go on Haj with the family. This minimises the disruption to pupils' formal education. The 'Ethnic Minority Achievement' teachers have recently devised the idea of a 'Holiday Scrapbook' for pupils on extended visits, with suggestions on items of interest to bring back and share with their class and teachers. On parents' evenings, the 'Ethnic Minority Achievement' teachers extend a special invitation to parents of targeted pupils, to report on their progress.

73. Overall, the quality of information that the school supplies to parents is good. It includes regular, friendly and informative newsletters and curriculum information. The information acknowledges the needs of groups of parents. For example, special arrangements relating to the end of Ramadan were described.

74. Pupils' reading record books are used well to exchange a range of information between the school and parents. Homework tasks are often written out for parents to see. Pupils' annual reports are detailed, helpful and set out targets for the future.

75. There is currently no parent-school association, although staff organise fund raising social events, which parents support. Parents helped to draft the home/school agreement.

76. The school welcomes parents into the school and increasing numbers are taking advantage of the thriving mothers and toddlers' music sessions and a popular beginners computer course offered by teachers from Blackburn College, which takes place in the school's computer suite.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

77. Overall, the quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. Since the school's previous inspection the headteacher, key staff and governors have worked hard and generally successfully, to improve the standards pupils achieve and the quality of teaching and planning.

78. The headteacher has a high profile in and around the school and provides strong leadership and sensitive support for the staff and pupils. This has been particularly effective in promoting higher standards in English, especially at Key Stage 2, and in creating a strong staff team. The deputy headteacher has made a significant contribution to the school's successful efforts to improve pupils' behaviour and is currently leading initiatives to further promote their self-esteem and their personal and social development. Co-ordinators of curriculum areas have clear priorities for development but several have only recently assumed their responsibilities and have had insufficient time to influence standards. A relative weakness in the management of the school is that in the drive to improve standards in literacy, too low a priority has been given to raising pupils' attainment in numeracy. This has resulted in standards in numeracy remaining too low and only slow improvement made. The school has recognised this and plans to monitor teaching in numeracy more frequently and to provide staff with intensive training in the subject.

79. Governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily and have good knowledge of the relative strengths and weaknesses in standards. They share in the analysis of the school's test data and participate in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Governors are very aware of the criteria by which comparative standards are judged and are committed to raising standards. Governors ensure good financial procedures. The budget is monitored rigorously and financial planning is well linked to the school's improvement priorities. The school continually seeks value for money when buying services. The school consults parents about proposed changes to school routines and procedures and this has proved particularly successful in improving standards of behaviour in the school.

80. A strength in the leadership and management of the school is the analysis of test data and tracking the progress of individual pupils to ensure that they achieve as they should. This is a significant development since the school's previous inspection in 1998. The school has used this information well to promote higher standards in literacy and in science but as yet, insufficiently in numeracy. A relative weakness in the school's monitoring of standards is its failure to fully recognise that older, brighter pupils are insufficiently challenged in those lessons which are planned for mixed age classes. The school has identified that the brightest pupils are not achieving high enough standards in national tests, especially by the end of Key Stage 1. As a result of analysing test data, both by gender and ethnicity, the school is currently seeking ways of raising the standards achieved by girls generally, but of Asian girls specifically.

81. The school's good progress in developing a strategy for managing its performance includes improved procedures for supporting students, newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school. All of these are well supported and individuals pay tribute to the quality of the support and guidance they receive from their mentors and other senior members of staff. All members of staff discuss their individual development needs and are required to meet targets set for them as classroom teachers or subject co-ordinators. The governors set challenging and relevant targets for the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.

82. A major strength of the school's leadership and management is the use of those resources made available to support pupils with special educational needs and the pupils for whom English is an additional language. The co-ordinators of both of these provisions ensure well-targeted, extra

support for these pupils, principally from two teachers and two bilingual support assistants who work mainly with pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6. These members of staff make a significant contribution to the good progress made by those pupils, especially by the time they leave the school.

83. The school has made good use of funds available for staff training for literacy and information and communication technology. This has increased teachers subject knowledge, which in turn has contributed to raising standards. The school's recent provision of an information and communication technology suite has also been a major factor in the improvement in pupils' attainment and confidence in the use of technology. The school makes good use of the music co-ordinator's expertise by enabling her to teach music throughout the school. This contributes significantly to the high standards achieved in the subject.

84. The school uses its spacious hall well to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in assemblies and as a venue for extra curricular activities and school productions. The lack of a specialist room for teaching food technology restricts the range of activities it is possible to offer to the pupils. The school makes good use of its library to teach pupils how to find information quickly and to encourage a love of books. The very good use of the high quality resources the school makes available for music teaching contributes well to the high standards the pupils achieve in the subject. The school's investment in the computer suite has paid good dividends in the rapid improvements made in the subject.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

85 In order to raise standards further the governors and headteacher should:

i. Raise standards in mathematics by:

- ensuring that all teachers deliver the National Numeracy Strategy effectively by challenging all pupils at a good pace;
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in numeracy more frequently and rigorously;
- providing teachers with further training in teaching the National Numeracy Strategy;
- the use of more mathematical aids and games in lessons to reinforce pupils' understanding of mathematical facts and relationships.

(paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 33, 39, 41, 43, 78, 80, 118-125)

ii. Improve the reading comprehension of many pupils by:

- arranging for more pupils to read with an adult and discuss what they read in more depth;
- focussing more upon comprehension exercises in English lessons;
- encouraging pupils to write clearer summaries of what they read and more book reviews.

(paragraphs 5, 7, 8, 105-117)

iii. Challenge the brighter pupils more by:

- ensuring that lessons provide suitable challenge for all pupils;
- reviewing the effectiveness of the teaching of the two year cycle of topics for the highest attaining pupils;
- identifying more closely those pupils who have the potential to achieve higher levels of attainment;
- making special provision for these pupils.

(paragraphs 10, 13, 33, 39, 80, 113, 115, 128, 135, 150, 156, 158)

As well as the main areas for improvement, the following issues should be considered by the school:

- Girls, especially of Asian heritage, underachieve, even given the much larger than average proportion of girls with special educational needs.
(paragraphs 2, 6, 21, 80)
- Attendance is lower than the national average and the school is not always prompt enough in following up absences.
(paragraphs 23, 58)
- The habitual lateness of the school bus causes disruption to the start of the day and can have an unsettling effect upon both teachers and pupils.
(paragraph 23)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 67 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 74 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 15 | 37 | 43 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 23 | 335 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0 | 89 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 11 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0 | 131 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 147 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 24 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 26 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 7.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.2 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 20 | 22 | 42 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 17 | 16 | 18 |
| | Girls | 12 | 16 | 14 |
| | Total | 29 | 32 | 32 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 69 (76) | 76 (67) | 76 (83) |
| | National | 84 (82) | 85 (83) | 90 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 17 | 18 | 18 |
| | Girls | 13 | 13 | 17 |
| | Total | 30 | 31 | 35 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 71 (74) | 74 (83) | 83 (83) |
| | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86) | 88 (87) |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 24 | 27 | 51 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 20 | 17 | 19 |
| | Girls | 19 | 14 | 22 |
| | Total | 39 | 31 | 41 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 76 (60) | 61 (56) | 80 (60) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| | Girls | 21 | 12 | 18 |
| | Total | 36 | 27 | 34 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 71 (64) | 53 (52) | 67(58) |
| | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69) | 80 (75) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 72 |
| Pakistani | 44 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 162 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 10 |

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 2 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 13 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 31 |
| Average class size | 31 |

Education support staff: YR - Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 402 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 26 |

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 37.5 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 26 |
|--------------------------------|----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999-2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 592,986 |
| Total expenditure | 610,591 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,791 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 59,003 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 41,398 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 380 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 190 |

Percentage of responses in each category

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 64 | 31 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 57 | 37 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 41 | 49 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 46 | 31 | 18 | 2 | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 64 | 33 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 53 | 34 | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 71 | 25 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 64 | 32 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 52 | 35 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 59 | 36 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 53 | 39 | 2 | 1 | 5 |

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

| | | | | |
|----|----|---|---|----|
| 50 | 32 | 6 | 1 | 11 |
|----|----|---|---|----|

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

86. Children enter the Nursery in the year of their third birthday. The Nursery staff plan the timetable to ensure similar experiences for children whether they attend the morning or afternoon sessions. Activities in both the Nursery and Reception are suitable and practically based, however, some of the regular activities, such as sand and water play, lack variety and a clear focus. A good start has been made in planning to take account of the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals, which have recently been introduced for the age group.

87. Parents are welcomed into the school. There are very good induction procedures, involving staff visiting all children in their own homes. There is also the opportunity for parents to discuss individual needs with the headteacher, teachers and the nurse. Parents bring their children into school. However, access is not available to the Nursery, beyond the cloakroom, until 9am. This makes the small waiting area a little cramped in cold weather and is not an encouraging start to the day.

88. The Nursery teacher makes an assessment of children's skills when they enter the Nursery, using in part information gained from discussions with parents. A more formal assessment is made of children's attainment in their first term in the Reception class. These indicate, that whilst a range of attainment is represented overall, children achieve below average scores in all areas of language and literacy and mathematics, apart from number, where their achievement is about average. Teachers and other adults co-operate well as a team and assess the progress of individual children as they work in small groups or individually. The school has identified the need for a new system of assessing children's progress related to the Early Learning Goals, to help improve standards. There is sound teaching overall, with good teaching in language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. This enables most children to make suitable progress, with good progress in speaking and listening. Nevertheless, by the time they move from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 the skills of the majority of the children remain below average. The good teaching of personal and social skills, however, enables children to develop a good attitude to learning. This maintains the satisfactory teaching identified in the previous inspection.

Personal, Social and emotional development

89. Good progress is made in the development of personal and social skills throughout the Nursery and in both Reception classes. Most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals set for them in this area of their learning by the time they enter Key Stage 1. The majority of pupils develop good attitudes to their work, particularly in class lessons and when directly supervised by adults in group activities. However, many pupils in Reception find it difficult to concentrate on an activity if they are not directly supervised. Nursery children settle quickly to the activity chosen at the start of the session. They join in well when working with adults and also when choosing from the range of ongoing activities. They understand what is expected of them, co-operating well when sharing equipment or taking turns, for example when working in the computer suite, and helping to tidy up. The good teamwork and consistent approach of the Nursery teacher and the Nursery Nurse provide a secure framework for children to develop a good attitude to work and to each other. In the Reception Year, children continue to grow in confidence and join in many whole school occasions. For example, they sit quietly and listen during a whole school assembly. They also join in singing practice for the Infants. They have a good understanding of the feelings of others when discussing the value of sharing in a class assembly and also when considering how they would feel if they had nobody to talk to at playtime.

90. The quality of teaching is generally good and personal and social skills are given a suitably high priority. All opportunities are taken to reinforce good behaviour. Children generally respond well to the teachers' high expectations. For example children in the Nursery sit quietly for snack time and in Reception they are aware of the class rules. Stickers are given for good behaviour and hard work and these are much valued by the children. Behaviour was less good in one Reception class when the management of pupils was insufficiently firm during a physical education lesson. Good opportunities are given for pupils to gain confidence throughout the Foundation Stage with children in the Nursery reciting rhymes as they use the puppet when pretending to be 'Humpty Dumpty' or in Reception when children volunteer to sing to the rest of the class. All staff encourage the children to value different ethnic backgrounds and cultures through stories from around the world, through making Gingerbread biscuits, pizzas and chappatis, but most of all through the good example of co-operation and mutual respect shown by all the adults in the Nursery and Reception classes. This promotes the racial harmony evident in the children.

Communication, language and literacy

91. The children make good progress in developing their language and literacy skills. However, because of their low level of speaking and listening skills when they enter the Nursery, a substantial number of children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. Every encouragement is given to children to develop their speaking and listening skills throughout the Foundation Stage. All the children in the Nursery know a good range of nursery rhymes. The Nursery staff have made a good range of resources, for example, puppets which relate to the rhymes and these are used well to encourage children to respond to the teacher's clues and to try to identify which puppet is hidden in the bag. Higher attaining children are very perceptive and explain clearly that there must be a wall in the bag if they can see 'Humpty Dumpty'. Children in the Reception class listen well to a story and are encouraged to explain what they think would happen next when the tiger came to tea. In the Nursery, children learn to make marks with a variety of pencils, crayons and felt tips and some higher attaining pupils copy letters and write their first name. In Reception a majority of children copy Cinderella's name on the invitation from the Prince and higher attaining pupils copy simple sentences and write a list of words in the class alphabet book, with words such as wagon and worm spelled correctly. Children develop a love of books from the earliest age, treating them with respect and turning the pages carefully. They look forward to story time and retell stories they have already heard, such as "The Hungry Caterpillar", in considerable detail. The majority of children pick out the letter that starts their name and higher attaining children know the sound made by most of the letters. In Reception, all children have a reading book, which they take home regularly to share with an adult. Lower attaining pupils follow the pictures in a book and explain what is happening in the story whilst higher attaining children read simple books with confidence. Most children follow the words as the teacher points to a text and many pick out common, short words from the page.

92. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is very good in the Nursery where every opportunity is given for children to speak, particularly when working in small groups with the teacher or Nursery Nurse in the quiet room. Language sessions are lively with the teacher encouraging a real sense of fun through her own humour and the good use of simple resources, such as the felt caterpillar and his daily diet, to encourage children to retell a story. The teachers in Reception introduce the appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy. The introductory sessions of these lessons are particularly successful, with good use made of big, class size books with children invited to retell the story of the Rainbow Fish and to explain how he shared his shiny scales to make the other fish happy. A very good feature of these class sessions is the good support given by the bilingual support assistants to those children for whom English is an additional language, enabling them to take a full part in the lesson. Children make good progress when they work in groups, supervised by an adult. However, learning is less successful in the self-chosen activities, which lack a clear focus and where children find it difficult to sustain concentration.

Mathematical development

93. Satisfactory progress is made and a suitable emphasis is placed on numeracy. The majority of children in Reception are in line to achieve the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals in their number work by the end of the year. However, this is not the case across other areas of mathematics. Every opportunity is taken to count throughout the Foundation Stage, be it the number of children in the group, pieces of fruit or frogs in the pond. Children in the Nursery know a good range of counting rhymes and the majority count objects up to five, though many are unsure when picking out the matching numeral. Higher attaining children count to 10 and beyond, and work out that if they have four strawberries, they would need two more to make six. The majority of pupils in Reception count forwards and backwards to 10. They put two sets of objects together to find a total and higher attaining pupils add single numbers together in their head. Most children recognise the common shapes, but they have insufficient opportunities to develop the language of mathematics related to comparison of measurement.

94. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good teaching of number. Teaching is good in the Nursery, where the teacher plans interesting strategies to encourage children to think, for example, spotting where she has made a deliberate mistake. She has a good understanding of the age group and provides suitable challenge for all the children. For example, a similar counting activity using sets of fruit is adapted for those children who need to practise counting to five and extended for those children who are capable of simple practical addition. Teaching is good in the introductory sessions of lessons in the Reception classes and in group activities led by the teacher. For example, using a 'storyboard' to develop an understanding of addition. It is less successful in the self-chosen activities, which lack clear objectives. When available, good support is given to the lower attaining children in the introductory session and in groups. The classroom assistant is deployed well and makes good use of day-to-day assessment, providing the teacher with a clear record of the progress made by individuals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

95. Children make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world. However, the majority do not achieve all the elements of the Early Learning Goals. Though the range of activities is satisfactory, the variety of the regular activities, such as learning through play with sand and water, is limited and lack clearly focussed objectives. Activities related to the topic are more interesting, for example, tasting a variety of different fruits in the Nursery and making pizzas and buns. Younger children name a good range of fruits and describe their colour and shape, whilst younger children know they need to eat a balanced diet, clean their teeth and go to bed early to stay healthy. They also know that objects are made from a variety of materials such as wood and plastic and experiment with magnets to find metal objects. Children have a good understanding of different cultures and compare different breads and how they are made and eaten. Children throughout the Foundation Stage have lessons in the computer suite and use the skills acquired in these lessons when using the computer. Children in the Nursery use the roller mouse with increasing accuracy to make patterns and children in Reception click the mouse to access the clown game. They also use an art program well to make pictures.

96. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in those specific lessons, which have a clear focus, such as comparing different foods or teaching computer skills. However, teaching is less successful in the more regular activities such as using the construction toys, where there is a lack of challenge and clear purpose.

Physical development

97. Children enjoy a carefully planned programme of physical activities enabling them to make satisfactory progress, particularly in moving about the classroom and playground in a controlled way. However, their ability to manipulate tools such as scissors and small construction toys and to dress themselves is less well developed. Children in the Nursery enjoy running in their playground and observe their streamers trailing behind. They stop quickly and safely and avoid bumping into others. Children in Reception develop their awareness of space as they move about the quadrangle, hopping, skipping and walking backwards with increasing control. All children have

access to climbing apparatus and wheeled toys and they use them with more control than smaller apparatus. Children have the opportunity to use a good range of writing implements to improve their skills.

98. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. An appropriate range of activities is planned and children are encouraged to develop independence, for example, stickers are given to children who have tried to change their clothes for physical education. In one outside lesson observed all staff from the Reception Year joined in with the children to demonstrate hopping and striding to good effect.

Creative development

99. Overall, children make satisfactory progress, though this varies between the different areas of creativity. Good progress is made in music throughout the Foundation Stage and most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of their learning by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Children derive great benefit from their lessons with the music specialist. Reception children join in with the singing practice and learn to sing tunefully and with a good sense of rhythm. Children in the Nursery have the opportunity to listen to gentle music throughout the day and know a good range of songs by heart. Children in Reception clap their hands and click their fingers in time to the music and move rhythmically to the tune of 'Michael Row the Boat'. Some children have the confidence to lead the class in singing 'If You are Happy!' Children have opportunities to use collage to make pictures, paint and draw pictures. Nursery children paint pictures of fruit with a good sense of colour. Children in Reception draw self-portraits, some with very good detail and others with a recognisable outline for the face.

100. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. Strengths include the imaginative way in which teachers and support assistants use puppets and stories to stimulate the children's interest in literature, and the use of music to promote creativity. A relative weakness is in teaching the children only a limited range of art skills.

ENGLISH

101. In 2000, national tests results at Key Stage 2 and teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 show that the overall standards achieved were below the national average for 11 year olds and well below that average for seven year olds. However, in Key Stage 2, the overall performance in English is above the average for similar schools.

102. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are just below the national average but have improved since 1999. The proportion of pupils in the present Year 6 attaining at the nationally expected level for age is broadly in line with the national average, but the percentage of pupils attaining at higher levels is below average. The overall performance of boys exceeds that of girls, which is a reversal of the national trend. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance exceeds the national expectation for age and matches the average above that expectation.

103. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in reading were well below average and have declined in the five years since 1996. However, standards in writing have improved since 1999, reflecting the priority given by the school to this area. Overall, the performance of boys exceeded that of girls.

104. The findings of this inspection are that standards achieved by 11 year olds in English are just below the national expectation for age. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 5 are better and match those typically expected for age. The oldest pupils in the key stage possess appropriate skills in listening; at times these are good, when matched to stimulating teaching. A number of pupils speak confidently in response to questions, but others have difficulty in expressing themselves clearly. In discussing myths, some imaginative scenarios are developed, but too many

pupils rely upon their peers to generate ideas. Most pupils' vocabulary relies upon a limited range of adjectives and verbs.

105. Most pupils in Year 6 read accurately, some with fluency and expression. The higher attaining pupils possess sufficient strategies to read difficult words. For example, they use letter sounds to pronounce 'impertinent' accurately. The higher attaining readers are fluent and expressive. They name a number of authors and comment appropriately upon them. However, they do not always have sufficient recall of stories recently read or other factual texts they study. This has significant impact upon the standards pupils achieve in other subjects particularly when they are required to solve word problems in mathematics. Reading levels are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The main reason for this is that most pupils have difficulty in drawing a wider meaning from their reading and are unable to use inference and deduction when responding to a story. They tend to take meaning at 'face value.' In Year 5, reading levels are similar to those in Year 6. This reflects the higher average attainment of this year group. The higher attaining readers are accurate and fluent; they respond well in discussing plot and character. Other pupils are less fluent, but understand the main elements of a story. They know how to use an index and other points of reference when using information books. Many pupils read quite accurately, but lack sufficient understanding to comprehend the text and have insufficient skills in locating information. The pupils' reading records suggest that levels of individual support by adults vary across the school. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to read, individually, to an adult and partly because of this a significant minority of pupils have difficulty understanding what they read.

106. Most pupils in Year 6 write in a cursive, joined style. The overall quality of their letter formation varies considerably. Some write neatly, whilst others lack consistency with the size and shape of their letters. The higher attaining pupils punctuate accurately and their spelling is generally sound. Other pupils are inconsistent in applying the basic rules of punctuation and spelling. Most pupils recognise adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. They understand a compound word and identify simile, using them correctly in comprehension exercises. However, they do not apply them sufficiently well in extended writing. This inhibits the overall quality of their vocabulary and self-expression. There is an interesting range of writing in place. For example, an analysis of 'Wind in the Willows' provides opportunities to speculate on variations to the story. Good work produces imaginative stage directions for stories and pupils use planning skills well in writing fables. However, there is insufficient writing for a variety of audiences; for example, poetry, correspondence, diary, book reviews and journalism. A number of pupils make good use of information and communication technology skills to complete their work.

107. Pupils in Year 5 are achieving expected standards. Their handwriting is well formed and they produce a good range of extended work, for example, in imaginative prose and criticism. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make satisfactory progress in developing basic skills. The attainment of the more able pupils meets expectations, though it is below expectations for other groups.

108. The results of this inspection broadly match the test results from last year. The attainment of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 is below expectation in all areas of English, except 'listening', where it meets expectations. Pupils listen carefully and some speak clearly. In lessons, some perceptive comments are made. Pupils suggest that 'The Hunter' is set in Zambia and another recognises who is being hunted. Good teaching often draws out such comments, but overall, pupils' vocabulary is too restricted and some do not speak clearly enough.

109. Standards in reading are below expectations for the higher attaining pupils and well below for the majority at the end of Key Stage 1. These higher attaining pupils are technically competent and some read with fluency and expression. They have varied strategies for recognising words. Other groups of pupils lack accuracy, fluency and confidence when using phonics. All ability groups have insufficient understanding of what they read. They find it difficult to interpret meaning and to discuss the plot. Despite the good work carried out in class group reading sessions, pupils have insufficient opportunities to read with an adult on an individual basis. In particular, there is insufficient time for pupils to discuss the wider aspects of their reading.

110. Whilst standards in writing and handwriting are below expectations, progress is being made

to improve them. Pupils in Key Stage 1, develop a cursive style and the oldest, higher attaining pupils, form their letters accurately. There is more consistency in formal handwriting exercises than in written work generally. Other groups of pupils are still working to improve the size and shape of their letters. Pupils begin to write on an interesting range of topics, for example, 'making a snowman' and 'fireworks.' Standards in punctuation and spelling vary, the former often suffering from errors of omission.

111. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. This good quality teaching has resulted in improving standards particularly in writing. Overall, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and have applied it well to achieve improvements in pupils' attainment. The particular strengths of teaching are in setting clear objectives and explaining them to the pupils. Pupils are managed effectively on most occasions. They respond with good and attentive behaviour in all classes. Some good questioning occurs and resources are used effectively on most occasions. This provides a stimulating learning environment in many lessons. Teachers and support assistants form a cohesive team. This is particularly effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Bilingual support is particularly good. This is crucial given the high number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. As a result these pupils are fully included and involved in all aspects of learning and that by the end of the key stage they make good progress.

112. Relative weaknesses in the quality of teaching include insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. This contributes to the lower than average proportion of pupils attaining higher levels especially by the end of Key Stage 1. In a few lessons clear learning objectives are not identified. As a result, pupils are not always sure of what is expected of them or the level at which they should work. There are too few occasions where time deadlines are set for specific tasks. Whilst whole class teaching is generally good, some group activities lack pace and pupils are given too long to complete basic tasks. As a result there is insufficient time to make best use of plenary discussion and develop pupils' understanding. In some classes, the teacher's lack of basic presentational skills hinders learning. For example in presenting text on an overhead projector that pupils find difficult to read.

113. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is broad, balanced and supports the development of literacy well. It effectively helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a wide range of assessment procedures in place, which provide detailed, but sometimes duplicated, information. The dedicated teachers and support staff ensure that arrangements to meet the needs of all pupils work well. All pupils enjoy equal opportunities in their learning. The co-ordinator is well organised and perceptive in determining future priorities. She has a clear view of standards achieved and recognises the importance of building upon areas of success and addressing areas of weakness. Since the inspection of 1996, the quality of teaching has risen significantly and curriculum documentation has improved.

MATHEMATICS

114. In the 2000 national tests for eleven year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was well below the national average. The percentage gaining the higher level was also well below the national average. These results were below average in comparison with schools with a similar intake of pupils. They follow two years where boys' results have slightly exceeded the national average, but girls' results have fallen well below them. The school's average results have stayed well below the national average in recent years.

115. In the 2000 national tests for seven year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was well below the national average. The percentage gaining the higher level was also well below the national average. These results were well below the average in comparison with schools with a similar intake of pupils. They follow four years of steady decline, in contrast with

the rising trend in national results. The inspection findings confirm that pupils attain low standards and that those pupils who could reach high levels of attainment are not achieving them. These findings represent a decline in standards for seven-year-olds and 11 year olds since the last inspection. However, the year group upon which the previous inspection judgements were based had a significantly lower percentage of pupils with special educational needs than at present and that which is the norm for the school. This is likely to have raised average standards. The present low standards principally result from the school's too low expectations of many pupils within each aspect of mathematics.

116. More able eleven-year-olds rarely work at an appropriate level. The exception to this is in number, where they carry out long multiplication with thousands. Otherwise their work in number, measures, shape and data-handling is at an average level, such as finding simple percentages, measuring the perimeter of simple shapes, or making tally charts. Pupils with special educational needs achieve a satisfactory level of work for their prior attainment, naming types of triangle and plotting co-ordinates, for example. Pupils again do not learn to apply mathematics or to interpret graphs. Only one in six pupils progress satisfactorily between the ages of seven and eleven. Older pupils in mixed age classes do not make the progress they should. Boys who use English as an additional language often achieve well by the time they leave the school. However, the girls who use English as an additional language are often amongst the lowest achievers. The inspection did not identify any cause for boys achieving better than girls. Higher attaining seven year-olds measure to 20 cm, add and subtract tens and units with number and measures, but rarely deal with numbers beyond 50. Occasionally they do tackle work at a higher level such as calculating fractions of small numbers and flight times in hours. Lower attaining pupils, however, achieve well by also measuring to 20cm and halving numbers. Pupils rarely learn to use and apply mathematics in practical investigations and when they do, struggle.

117. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory across the school. Strategies for teaching numeracy skills are not effective. Teaching in all years has two main strengths. Teachers and support assistants work well together to provide for pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, they make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve well. Similar support for pupils with English as an additional language has secured good progress in their learning. This is particularly helpful when pupils learn new skills such as partitioning numbers in addition. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, so that they willingly concentrate on their work. However, other strengths are not general. For example, some teachers try to make pupils aware of the purpose of the lesson, which helps to concentrate their minds on what they are learning. In a few lessons, individual pupils, such as those with special educational needs, benefit from being individually questioned. A few teachers make use of pupils' mental strategies to teach addition and subtraction. Teachers make satisfactory use of computers. For example, pupils make tallies of traffic counts, which they transfer to graphs. They also use computers and numeracy skills in geography to make graphs and charts to compare rainfall in different places. Teachers use homework inconsistently, so that it is not an adequate aid to progress.

118. There are two main weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Firstly, teachers have too low expectations of pupils, especially of those who could attain high levels. This is particularly evident in pupils' written work. Marking is inconsistent and the daily use of assessment is not influencing planning enough to meet the needs of more able pupils. Secondly, teachers frequently introduce new ideas in an abstract way and fail to give pupils enough opportunities to practise new skills in a practical way. This means that pupils rarely handle apparatus or carry out investigations to support their learning of new concepts. This leads to a general lack of liveliness so that pupils are not stimulated to learn, and become restless during class listening sessions. This makes the numeracy strategy less effective.

119. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. They are keen to answer questions, especially when they are learning a new skill, using apparatus such as 'Napier's bones' to add. They collaborate well and present their work neatly. Their interest dwindles during long explanations but they concentrate and persevere well in group activities.

120. The school has made improvements in provision since the previous inspection. However, they are not enough to have raised standards sufficiently. Class teaching is better, but there is unsatisfactory guidance for teachers on what they should expect of pupils. The school has very recently introduced new and very appropriate strategies to raise standards. These have not had time to take effect on pupils' learning. Firstly, teachers work together to find the reasons for low achievement, whether general or specific to groups of pupils. This promises to enable them to identify any areas of weakness and to plan more effectively to meet pupils' needs. Secondly, the school has begun to track every individual pupil's progress. This is aimed at identifying early those pupils who need extra support. Thirdly and most importantly, mathematics is to be the major priority now the National Literacy Strategy is well established. It is evident that the staff is committed to improving standards. To do this they will need the training that is already planned.

SCIENCE

121. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, the number of pupils achieving the expected level was below the national average but was broadly in line with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving a higher level was below the national average. However, the overall performance of the pupils in the year 2000 showed a good improvement from the low point of the previous year. The findings of this inspection indicate that this improvement will not be maintained for the current year, due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. Analysis of pupils' work in Year 5 gives a more promising picture, with them currently working at the level expected for their age.

122. In the 2000 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, the number of pupils achieving the expected level was below the national average and the number of pupils achieving the higher level was well below the national average. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of previous inspection. Whilst there was a slight rise in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels, inspection evidence indicates a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in the second year of the planned two year cycle of topics. This is because they are given very similar work to children in the younger age group.

123. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 is good overall, but varies according to the age group. The same work is planned for pupils in Year 3 and 4 and for pupils in Year 5 and 6. Analysis of pupils' work shows that whilst younger pupils in each group attain standards in line, or above those expected for their age, the older, more able pupils and those with average ability in the group, are insufficiently challenged and attain standards lower than they should. Pupils with special educational needs, whatever their age, make good progress and attain standards appropriate for their prior attainment. Analysis of the statutory test results indicated pupils' lack of confidence in scientific exploration and enquiry and this is still a relative weakness. A relative strength in pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2 is their knowledge and understanding of life processes. For example, older pupils know under which conditions plants flourish or die and younger pupils confidently name different sorts of teeth and discuss the effects of fluoride in keeping teeth strong and healthy. Younger pupils in the key stage have little understanding of the properties of materials because they are taught little of this. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a good understanding of the properties of magnets and how these are used. Whilst pupils now have regular opportunities for scientific enquiry, they are not yet able to devise their own experiments or to be sufficiently analytical of their own results in order to improve their methods.

124. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 1 varies. The curriculum is based on a two-year cycle with all pupils in the key stage taught the same work at the same time. Analysis of pupils' work shows that whilst the planned activities are suitable for the pupils in Year 1 and the lower attaining pupils in Year 2, who achieve at a satisfactory rate, they lack sufficient challenge for the higher attaining, older pupils. A strengths in pupils' scientific knowledge includes their understanding of differences between those things which are living, such as the lion in the zoo, and those that have never lived, such as apples in the shop. In addition, they have good knowledge of

those foods which are healthy to eat. There has been some improvement in activities to promote scientific enquiry since the previous inspection, following the introduction of a new scheme of work at the start of this school Year. Whilst a good level of support is given, the poor language skills of some pupils limits their understanding.

125. Where additional support is provided in the classroom, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Progress is also good for those pupils for whom English is an additional language because they are well supported in lessons. Test results indicate that girls achieve less well than boys do, although observation of lessons shows that they are equally involved with their work and in discussions.

126. A new scheme of work has been introduced this year and this covers all elements of the science curriculum. However, because topics are covered over a two-year period, pupils will not have covered some aspects of the curriculum currently in Year 2 and Year 6. For example, Year 2 pupils will have had insufficient experience of electricity and Year 6 will not have studied microorganisms or changing circuits. The school is aware of the concerns related to the science curriculum and the mixed age classes and is to review the impact at the end of the this year.

127. Overall, pupils' attitudes to science are satisfactory. They are satisfactory in Key Stage 2, with pupils co-operating well when working in groups. However, the management of the behaviour of some older pupils takes up a lot of the teachers' time. It is good in Key Stage 1, where pupils listen well and join in discussions. Pupils persevere to finish their task and work in books is well presented.

128. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and is good in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection. This is an improvement in the quality of teaching compared with the previous inspection. This is due in part to the greater guidance given by the scheme of work and also the good level of support given to colleagues by the co-ordinator. In Key Stage 1, teachers use questions well and this enables pupils to remember what they have learned in previous lessons. Teachers' clear explanations ensure that pupils start their group work straight away. Good use is made of a range of resources to help understanding. For example, in a lesson about clay, the teacher had a good collection of everyday objects, which led the pupils to deduce that when it had been baked in the kiln and glazed, it was waterproof but it was also breakable. Whilst lessons are interesting and generally well prepared, they lack sufficient challenge for the older, higher attaining pupils in the class. Where additional support is available in lessons, support assistants in both key stages make a good contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. In Key Stage 2, lessons are generally well planned and the learning objective is clearly stated. Frequent use is made of correct scientific language to improve understanding and good scientific practice is encouraged by the emphasis placed on the clear recording of results. Good questioning skills require pupils to think, although pupils are given insufficient opportunities to devise their own experiments. Most teachers use good strategies to manage the behaviour of the minority of potentially disruptive pupils, keeping them working and enabling all pupils to concentrate on their work. In the less successful lessons observed this was not so well managed and the level of noise inhibited concentration.

129. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development through the topics on healthy eating, the emphasis on safety and through the group work. One teacher was heard reminding pupils that "co-operation gets the best job done." Pupils have good opportunities to develop their literacy skills when writing up experiments and also looking up information. Good use is also made of computers to research information from CD-ROM and on the Internet. The use of pupils' numeracy skills is less marked, with limited opportunities for accurate measurement and calculations.

130. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start in producing a useful scheme of work. However, she recognises the need to review the implications and effects of the two year cycle, particularly for older, higher attaining pupils. The results of pupils' end of year assessments

are passed to the next teacher. A new record system, more closely related to the National Curriculum assessment format is at an early stage of development and promises to provide more helpful information about pupils' progress which will enable teachers to better identify strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' attainment.

ART AND DESIGN

131. Overall, inspection evidence indicates that standards in the subject meet the national expectation for age, at the end of both key stages. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Although examples of the full range of skills in the subject were not seen, planning for the subject shows that all topics are covered over a two- year period.

132. Similar work is planned for both Year 1 and Year 2 and pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory. By the end of the key stage, pupils produce a good range of collage, using various materials such as tissue, wool and sticky paper. They learn to evaluate their own work to improve their skills, for instance, one pupil observed that 'tearing the paper shapes was hard'. They look closely at colour and use a variety of techniques to make patterns on material, including tie/die and fabric paints. All pupils have the opportunity to practise and improve their drawing skills in their sketch book and in one lesson observed, pupils looked closely at Asian patterns and reproduced good, detailed elements of the design, using soft pencils.

133. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 3 draw fruit in fine detail and in Year 4 they smudge pastels to create interesting variations in shade. Pupils in Year 5 improve their own figure drawing by reproducing the techniques of well-known artists. By the end of the key stage, pupils portray effectively a variety of emotions in their drawings, through different facial expressions and capture movement well when they draw a series of cartoon characters.

134. Pupils generally enjoy art and the pupils seen in Year 2 are enthusiastic and concentrate well. Analysis of pupils' sketchbooks throughout the school indicates that they try hard to improve their skills. However, in a Year 6 lesson a significant minority of pupils found it difficult to concentrate, and required all the management skills of the teacher, supported well by the special support worker. It is noticeable throughout the school that there are few examples of pupils' work on display to help them celebrate their achievements in art. The exception being a beautifully made patchwork quilt displayed in the entrance hall made by the pupils to celebrate the millennium.

135. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with drawing skills well taught through regular practice using a variety of materials and techniques. A good lesson about pattern was observed in Year 2. The teacher had prepared a good range of examples for the lesson and used the considerable expertise and knowledge of two Asian classroom assistants well to discuss the form and meaning of Indian patterns, on various garments they had brought from home. This greatly aided the pupils' progress. Her clear introduction guided pupils to look carefully at the composition of the patterns and this lesson contributed well to pupils' cultural development. Only limited use is made of displays of the work of different artists to inspire pupils.

136. Topics to be taught over a two-year period have been agreed and a more detailed scheme of work is now being developed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

137. Due to timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. However, analysis of pupils' work and photographs, together with discussions with pupils, make it possible to judge that standards are in line with national expectations. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection.

138. The curriculum includes food technology so pupils in Year 4, for example, design and make their own pizza. They learn to apply the principles of hygiene. Pupils create a sequence of instructions that are based on a list of ingredients and equipment. They also plan their pizzas with well-illustrated and labelled designs. In Year 5, they tackle more difficult products which have to work, such as musical instruments. Once they have made them, they apply decoration. Here, they need to consider the quality of their work more carefully. Pupils plan in greater detail than was the case at the time of the previous inspection. However, their evaluations are still insufficiently self-critical. By the age of seven, pupils design and make simple puppets in different ways, some with moving parts. Teachers infrequently evaluate the quality of pupils' work critically. This means that pupils are given insufficient guidance on how to improve their designs and plans. In the past, older pupils have produced a wide variety of designs, including magnetic boats, bridges, moving cars and other products involving electric circuits. These involved more challenge than some recent tasks.

139. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching. However, teachers ensure that pupils have the opportunity to carry out a wide range of design projects. These include sewing in order to make purses and oven gloves. Design and technology is occasionally applied to science, such as making moving vehicles involving electric circuits. All pupils are taught health and safety procedures when using tools.

139. The co-ordinator provides good guidance to teachers about projects they may set pupils. The scheme of work is adapted to fit in with the changes in the amended National Curriculum and to meet the needs of the pupils in the school. It has recognised that while alternating art and design and design and technology is good for developing quality over a short period, there is the danger of skills being forgotten. Consequently, the co-ordinator and staff are looking for ways to bring design and technology into the curriculum, for example in geography or history. Pupils occasionally use computers to record designs. However, teachers do not use the opportunity to develop pupils' writing when asking them to plan and evaluate their products.

GEOGRAPHY

141. Due to timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe any lessons in the subject. However, evidence from teachers' plans, discussion with pupils and staff and analysis of pupils' work, make it possible to judge that by the ages of 11 and seven, pupils attain standards in line with the national expectation for age. For 11 year olds, this is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection and represents an improvement at Key Stage 1.

142. By the time they leave the school, pupils have good knowledge of climates, customs and landscapes that are different to those of their own locality, for instance that of Nairobi. Pupils use the keys and symbols of an Ordnance Survey map well to find footpaths, church spires, towers and post offices. Pupils use two figure co-ordinates accurately to locate features on road maps and carry out local surveys of traffic density and interpret this information effectively, using a bar chart on the computer. They study the impact of pollution both locally and in rain forests arguing persuasively either for or against the use of potentially harmful economic processes. In the lower juniors pupils gain good knowledge of village life in India by identifying the climate, crops and lifestyle of the region.

143. At Key Stage 1, pupils use basic map skills well to draw maps of their immediate surroundings and have good knowledge of the different uses of buildings located on their route to school. They know well the purpose of various shops and correctly identify which they would use to buy medicines, meat, books, newspapers and take-away meals of different ethnic traditions. Pupils have a good understanding of procedures they need to follow if they leave the country by air or sea, and that these are in the interest of their own safety and that of fellow passengers.

144. Pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language, make similar progress to other pupils and attain standards appropriate to their prior attainment. All

pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons. The subject promotes the pupils' personal development very well.

145. The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum in the subject, which is in line with National Curriculum guidelines. The subject is taught through two-year topic cycles. Whilst this means that pupils in mixed age classes are taught different topics in successive years, the teaching of the subject does not always ensure that older higher attaining pupils develop their geographical skills sufficiently. There are opportunities for pupils to widen their geographical experiences when they undertake field studies in the immediate locality of the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend a residential centre and practise their orienteering skills and study geological features. The school imaginatively converts one of the classrooms into an 'airport' to provide Key Stage 1 pupils with the experience of the procedures associated with air travel. Infant pupils act out a journey by plane, sitting in 'aircraft seats' and are served refreshments by 'airline staff' drawn from older pupils. This makes a good contribution to their geographical knowledge and their social and cultural development.

146. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has clear priorities for the further development of the subject in the school, with an emphasis upon more fieldwork. Assessment in the subject has recently improved. It is now carried out at the end of each topic and set against key skills identified in the scheme of work. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to literacy and numeracy when pupils write accounts of life in other countries and compile rainfall and temperature figures. They use information and communication technology to represent their findings using a data-handling program.

HISTORY

147. It was not possible to observe any history lessons in Key Stage 2 and only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1. However, from talking to teachers and pupils, the analysis of the schools' history policy, planning documents and pupils' work, it is possible to judge that by the time the pupils leave the school they attain standards in line with the national expectation for age. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection.

148. In their study of World War 2 higher attaining pupils develop a good sense of chronology by listing the main events of the War, in date order and name the major leaders of the time. All pupils write letters to their parents relating their experiences as evacuees. Higher and average attaining pupils identify key historical questions in order to prompt their research into why the World War 2 started and why events unfolded as they did. Pupils throughout the key stage distinguish between primary and secondary sources of evidence. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 listen to recordings of original broadcasts by Churchill, Chamberlain and Hitler and they read accounts written by soldiers and airmen. Higher attaining pupils begin to question the validity of evidence showing a good awareness of bias and interpretation. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study Ancient Greece and average and higher attaining pupils know that houses and religion were far different than those that they experience in their own lives. They combine their literacy skills with their knowledge of the Greek gods when they write letters of thanks to Artemis, Demeter and Poseidon for the gifts they provide. Lower attaining pupils use world maps to identify the location of Ancient Greece and use history texts to look up the names of the main cities of that time such as Athens, Sparta and Delphi.

149. By the age of seven, pupils also attain standards in line with the national expectation. Pupils know about famous characters from the past, such as Guy Fawkes, and why they are significant. In Year 2 pupils describe life in the trenches in World War 1, reinforcing their work in literacy, and understand that Queen Elizabeth 2 was crowned when living conditions were significantly different to their own. They use photographs and videos to research this and list similarities and differences between the 1950's and now. When they dress up as Victorian school children and experience the classroom regime and teaching methods of that era, pupils in Years 1 and 2 gain a good

understanding of school life in that time. They also compare household appliances used in 1900 with those of today to appreciate the huge advances in technology.

150. Pupils who use English as an additional language attain similar standards to their fellow pupils, although their ability to write fluently is sometimes limited by some unfamiliarity with the English language, particularly in Key Stage 1. By the time they leave the school, these pupils are often amongst the highest attainers in the subject as a result of the good provision made for them and the well-targeted support they receive from the bi-lingual support staff.

151. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. In one lesson observed, in Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching was good. In this lesson, the teacher and other adults promoted pupils' sense of chronology well by encouraging them to compile their family tree, going back two generations. By sensitive questioning the class teacher helped pupils identify their relations and encouraged them to find ways of describing how they could tell which was which. Pupils of Asian heritage contributed well to cultural understanding when they explained how relationships differed in their families to their fellow pupils. Photographic evidence indicates teachers use imaginative methods to interest and involve pupils in historical investigation, for instance, when they take on the role of soldiers or famous historical characters. Discussion with pupils and evidence from their work indicate that they have very good attitudes to the subject. The pupils' behaviour in the lesson observed was good.

152. The curriculum for the subject is broad and well balanced and provides pupils with a good range of historical experience. The school plans the teaching on a two-year cycle with two age groups covering the same work. This is designed to cater for the mixed age classes that exist throughout the school. Overall, this is an appropriate strategy and ensures that pupils cover the prescribed National Curriculum. However, teachers' plans do not always take enough account of the progressive teaching of historical skills. This means that the oldest, higher attaining pupils do not always make as much progress as they should. By involving visitors in history lessons, teachers stimulate a keen interest in topics such as the Vikings and working conditions in Victorian England. Visits to places of historical interest, such as Wigan Pier, provide pupils with good knowledge of their own heritage and a keen appreciation of how life was in the past. At present there is no subject co-ordinator, but documentation provides evidence that the subject has been imaginatively and strongly led. The school has an adequate stock of resources to support teaching and learning and makes good use of community resources to complement the school's provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

153. At the time of the previous inspection standards in both key stages were below the national expectation for age and very little teaching of information technology took place. Good improvements have now been made through the provision of an information and communication technology suite. Weekly lessons are timetabled for each class, including the Nursery, and teachers use computers regularly in classrooms. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils generally work at the expected level. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are still slightly below the expected level. The oldest pupils have, as yet, not made up for their lack of experience in earlier years, but indications are that other age groups in the key stage are now working at the expected level.

154. All pupils currently achieve well from their previous low level, due mainly to the planned teaching of skills outlined in the overview of the scheme of work. Work is planned across two years, with all pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, similarly for Year 3 and Year 4 together and for Year 5 and Year 6 together. It has proved useful for the grouped years to be taught the same lessons because this has ensured that skills have been taught systematically for the first time and given older pupils the opportunity to fill in the gaps in their learning.

155. Pupils in Key Stage 2 extend their word processing skills and pupils in Year 4 illustrate their history topics on Greeks. By the end of the key stage pupils draft and edit their work and also organise the sports page of a newspaper to announce the arrival of a new manager for Blackburn

Rovers. All pupils make good use of the digital camera, with older children taking photographs to illustrate self-descriptions. By the end of the key stage, pupils use the Internet to find information about Kenya and all pupils readily access information from the CD-ROMS. Pupils learn to organise their work throughout the key stage, with pupils in Year 3 saving work to be retrieved the following week. They also design attractive cards for Eid and for Christmas using graphics programs. Older pupils enter information onto a spreadsheet, interpret the results, and understand the importance of entering the correct data.

156. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils use the computer for word processing and drawing pictures. For example, they produce short “thumbnail sketches” of themselves, such as “My name is.... and I eat chips.” Pupils use the computer in mathematics to compile a birthday bar chart. They enter and exit a program by clicking on the cursor and to investigate a shipwreck or what is hidden in the garden. Pupils make good use of the computer in a science lesson to find information about materials from the CD-ROM.

157. Pupils enjoy their lessons and develop independence as they research information on the Internet or on encyclopaedia programs. Pupils co-operate well in pairs, sharing a computer, to help each other to solve problems and to use the correct keys and icons.

158. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good in both key stages. Lessons have a good introduction and good use is made of the correct language from the earliest age, to help to develop pupils’ understanding. All teachers have undergone training in the subject and this has been a major factor in improving teachers’ confidence and the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Many teachers use the computer to prepare their own worksheets and this improvement in their own skills is evident when they teach the pupils. The teaching sessions in the information and communication technology suite are generally used well, but in one lesson the demonstration of a new program took too long, leaving insufficient time for pupils to explore its capabilities. Teachers make good use of the computers in their classrooms to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported by adults and other pupils in their group and make good progress.

159. The subject is led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a clear understanding of what is needed to ensure that provision for the subject continues to improve. She gives clear guidance to colleagues by planning topics and lessons and is available to give advice and support where needed. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy through word processing and drafting and editing of extended pieces of writing. It makes a sound contribution to numeracy when younger pupils use number programs to compile graphs and spreadsheets.

MUSIC

160. Standards in music are above the national expectation, except in instrumental composition in which they are in line with expectations for age. The quality of teaching and learning is a strength of the school. Pupils learn to sing very well before they are seven years old, so that by the time they are eleven their intonation and rhythmic precision is accurate. Moreover, they sing with great enthusiasm. Pupils listen well to a variety of musical styles that occasionally come from different cultures. They also learn to listen to one another’s taped compositions, so that they discuss what makes them effective or how they could be improved. Pupils have fewer opportunities to compose. They do not produce more complex rhythmic and non-rhythmic structures. Pupils’ ability to identify musical instruments is good. They select those that are suitable for their purposes, such as to create the impression of a river. Pupils learn to respond to both written music and to music set out with their own symbols. Pupils with special education needs make good progress when given close support. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.

161. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, particularly in singing. A music specialist teaches all classes and consequently all pupils make good progress. She has good subject expertise and knowledge, which results in pupils learning to play instruments correctly and to use the correct musical vocabulary. Planning is very thorough and high expectations are set for what the pupils can do. Assessment of individual pupils’ progress is used well to plan future lessons.

Lessons involve a rich variety of activities such as using claps and other body sounds, singing, playing instruments and listening to music. Lessons are well prepared and organised and maximum use is made of a very good range of musical instruments, including keyboards, so that pupils' compositions develop interesting textures. All pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and consequently behave well. The hall provides a good venue for music lessons and is used to advantage for whole class lessons and group work.

162. There is a very wide range of opportunities for instrumental work and singing outside lessons. There is a large choir, with both boys and girls, which performs to a high standard. The school encourages pupils to learn to play woodwind, stringed, keyboard and other instruments, by offering them expert tuition. The school also uses pupils' talents to very good effect in school productions and for events in the local community. It uses outside expertise to provide exciting workshops for pupils.

163. The school allocates time for practising songs relevant to assemblies, which adds to their meaning for the pupils. The high standards identified at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

164. By the time the pupils leave the school they attain standards in line with national expectation for age.

165. In Key Stage 2 pupils work hard to improve their gymnastic skills. They move in a controlled manner adopting a range of individual and paired balances. They are aware of safety issues and know that energetic exercise promotes good health. In Years 4 and 5 all pupils swim, with the majority achieving 25 metres unaided. Some pupils gain certificates in water safety. Pupils have a good range of skills in various sports, for example, cricket, soccer, rugby and netball. Through a residential visit, to the Robin Wood Activity Centre, older pupils' gain valuable experience of adventurous activities. They acquire an appropriate range of skills in canoeing, abseiling and orienteering. During the school year they also develop their dance and athletics skills.

166. Pupils in Key Stage 1, develop appropriate ball skills. They catch, throw and kick a softball with satisfactory control. They work in pairs, passing a ball between them or taking it past obstacles. Pupils' with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language work hard to achieve success and complete their tasks. All develop their range of skills through involvement in dance, games and gymnastics.

167. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In both key stages care is taken to include all pupils in activities. In some lessons, good use is made of support staff to help physically impaired pupils join in fully. However, on other occasions, support staff are under-utilised. Effective demonstrations by teachers ensure that pupils know what standards are expected of them, though on occasion instructions lack clarity. At times, lessons are insufficiently active and lack pace. Most lesson plans ensure that activities are planned to provide increasing levels of challenge. Most pupils respond positively and develop their skills to an appropriate level. They are usually well behaved and attentive.

168. The co-ordinator is a physical education specialist. The scheme of work has been revised appropriately. The co-ordinator has developed a satisfactory range of monitoring procedures, which include observations of lessons and demonstrations of good practice. This has helped teachers to gain more confidence in teaching those areas of the curriculum in which they have less expertise. The curriculum is now broad and balanced and includes out door and adventure activities. This represents an improvement in provision since the previous inspection. The curriculum promotes social development well and is fully inclusive, providing opportunity for all.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

169. Standards of attainment in religious education broadly meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Pupils in all classes make satisfactory progress.

This is an improvement on the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection.

170. In Key Stage 2, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of five world faiths. By the end of the key stage they write in some detail about well known parables, such as 'the prodigal son'. They extend their knowledge of Christianity when they consider specific aspects of faith, for example, the preparation for Christ's birth during advent. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how religious beliefs can influence behaviour. They investigate world aid programmes to explore the notion of caring for others. Pupils gain good insight into the lives of religious leaders, such as, Christ, Mohammed and Guru Nanak. They study the lives of Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela to assess their contributions to the world and to identify their motives. Overall, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of major religious beliefs. They recognise the importance of world agencies to support under-privileged people. Pupils recognise that their own feelings influence relationships at a personal level.

171. In Key Stage 1, most work is oral. Pupils discuss their feelings of happiness or fear and write briefly describing good and bad news. They identify major celebrations and illustrate them, for example, to produce Christmas cards. Pupils recall stories and write about them, for example, Zacchaeus, the tax collector. They investigate festivals in different faiths, for example, Eid and gain an understanding of its importance to Moslems. When they study Judaism, pupils learn to write their names in Hebrew.

172. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to reflect upon different faiths and to sometimes present their ideas to other pupils through drama and music.

173. Due to timetable restrictions it was not possible to observe any lessons Key Stage 1. From the analysis of work and discussions with staff and pupils it is possible to judge that the curriculum is wide ranging. Pupils are given opportunities to explore their feelings in differing situations. This is appropriately supported where well known stories from the Christian and Islamic faiths are introduced. These enable pupils to develop a basic understanding of other faiths. These are introduced to pupils through discussion and writing tasks.

174. Overall, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, with examples of good and some very good teaching observed during the inspection. The strengths of teaching include clear objectives, good questioning and the effective use of resources. Where teaching is particularly good, in Year 6, pupils are effectively managed and involved in discussion. The tasks set promote their thinking, for example, in planning an Islamic meal choosing only permitted ingredients. The class-teachers' good knowledge and understanding ensured a confident approach. Pupils' own knowledge and understanding was used effectively to support everyone's learning. These factors helped to promote good learning opportunities for all pupils and they made rapid progress.

175. There are occasions when pupils' own contributions could be managed more effectively in class. This could be achieved by the more careful matching of pupils in discussion groups. When presenting their work during plenary sessions, pupils are not always positioned in such a way as to give the maximum impact or attention for, what they say. However, pupils have good attitudes to their learning and behave well in lessons.

176. The curriculum meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and makes a good contribution in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It also makes a satisfactory contribution to literacy. The curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for all pupils to study a wide range of world religions. The co-ordinator works hard to ensure that staff are supported, for example, by the provision of a good range of high quality resources.