

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Dalton St. Michael's C. E. (VA)  
Primary School**  
Wigan

LEA area : Lancashire

Unique Reference Number : 119493

Headteacher : Mrs G. Goodson

Reporting inspector : Mrs A. Soper  
OIN 18148

Dates of inspection : 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707537

Inspection carried out under **Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996**

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Junior and Infant

Type of control : Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils : 4 – 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Higher Lane  
Dalton  
Wigan  
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WN8 7RP

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Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Miss D. Wood

Date of previous inspection : January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs A. Soper, Rgl	English	Attainment and progress
	Science	Teaching
	Art	The curriculum and assessment
	History	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Music	
	Special educational needs	
	Under fives	
Mrs S. Dixon, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
Mr R. Burgess, TI	Mathematics	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Information technology	Leadership and management
	Design and technology	The efficiency of the school
	Geography	
	Physical education	
	Equal opportunities	

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- ◆. Standards are good in information technology by the end of Key Stage 2.
- ◆. Pupils make good progress in music throughout the school.
- ◆. Good progress is made in history at Key Stage 2.
- ◆. The headteacher provides good leadership and has clear educational direction for the school.
- ◆. The school is managed well; there is good support from the governing body.
- ◆. The quality of teaching is good overall.
- ◆. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- ◆. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good.
- ◆. The school implements its aims and values very well.
- ◆. There is a good climate for learning; staff have good relationships with each other and with the pupils.
- ◆. There is an effective partnership with parents and the community.
- ◆. Good support and guidance is provided for pupils.
- ◆. The accommodation and resources are good; the school benefits from the active, fund-raising roles undertaken by the Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The use of assessment to inform lesson planning is not fully developed.
- II. In school development planning there is insufficient projection beyond the current year.
- III. Handwriting is not consistently developed across the school.
- IV. There are some limitations in the curriculum for children under five.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The action plan produced at that time provided clear intentions to improve four main areas. These were to maintain the existing quality of teaching, learning and care for pupils; to improve assessment and the evaluation of pupils' work in order to raise standards further; to provide more opportunities for independent investigation in mathematics and science; to improve the teaching of reading in Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, two of the three teachers have left the school and the headteacher has had a prolonged absence. Within the last year, the school has successfully improved the teaching of reading at Key Stage 2. Considerable effort has been made to provide a good range of books for all pupils, including those with lower prior attainment. The headteacher has ensured that the class libraries now contain a good range of books and has successfully raised the profile of reading in the school. Pupils are heard to read regularly and good support is provided for pupils with lower prior attainment in reading. There are now good opportunities provided for pupils to undertake independent investigations in mathematics and science. The school has significantly enhanced this provision in science and benefits from the support given in extra-curricular activities in this subject. To maintain the quality of learning, the school has carefully monitored the curriculum provision, to ensure that

there is appropriate breadth and balance. The new teachers benefit from clear programmes which guide planning. An assessment policy has been written and the consistency of marking has been monitored. Test results are analysed and assessment opportunities are often identified in plans. The school has yet to make effective use of assessment to inform planning for pupils with differing prior attainment. The school has recently had major upheavals in staffing and in building refurbishment, but has continued to focus on ways in which to enhance its provision. It is well placed to continue to make further improvements.

## Standards in subjects

As the number in each year group in 1998 was less than 10, it is not appropriate to compare the performance of pupils in the school with the performance of pupils nationally or with the performance of pupils in similar schools.

Attainment on entry to the school is average. By five years of age, pupils achieve good standards in reading, writing and number and attain at least satisfactory standards in all other areas of learning. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection show that pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is satisfactory and in line with national expectations in most subjects. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. A significant number achieve good standards above the national average in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. The oldest pupils in the school achieved good standards in information technology and made good progress in history. Pupils in both key stages achieved well in music. Standards for the majority of pupils aged 7 and 11 were satisfactory in all other subjects.

## Quality of teaching

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. It was good or better in over one half of the lessons seen and satisfactory in the remainder. This is particularly commendable, considering the recent, unexpected changes in staffing, with two of the three teachers having been appointed only very recently. Teaching in music is good and the headteacher provides a consistently good quality of teaching in Key Stage 2.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils are polite and courteous. A few pupils at Key Stage 1 sometimes display inappropriate behaviour in some lessons.
Attendance	Good. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance.
Ethos*	Good. Pupils have a good attitude to their work and relationships are good. Teachers are committed to providing a good quality of education and care for their pupils.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides good leadership. Leadership and management is good, with governors giving good support. The school's aims and values are implemented well.
Curriculum	Good overall, though some provision for children under five is limited. Planning at Key Stages 1 and 2 ensures continuity and progression. The school does not yet make effective use of assessment to inform planning.
Pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory provision overall, though the quality of individual education plans varies. Individual support is good.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Good number of teaching, non-teaching and administrative staff. Good arrangements for the professional development of staff. Good accommodation and resources overall, though the children under five lack large outdoor play equipment.
Value for money	Good value for money.

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

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>V. Encouragement to take an active part in school life.</p> <p>VI. The school is approachable, promotes positive attitudes and high values.</p> <p>VII. The school achieves high standards of good behaviour.</p> <p>VIII. Their children like school.</p>	<p>IX. Some would welcome more</p> <p>X. Some are dissatisfied about the work</p>

The responses to the questionnaire sent to parents and at the meeting with inspectors prior to the inspection indicate a high level of satisfaction with the education provided. Inspectors



support the parents' positive views. The homework provided is good. The school provides good information to parents.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

XI. improve standards in handwriting;

(paragraphs 11, 12, 78, 79 and 83)

XII. continue to develop assessment procedures to ensure that assessment is used effectively to inform planning for pupils with differing prior attainment;

(paragraphs 17, 25, 26, 28, 32, 34, 37, 38, 52, 80, 81, 84, 85 and 137)

XIII. develop its strategic planning for school development beyond the current year.

(paragraph 53)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 11, 62, 74, 75 and 76:

XIV. improve the classification system in libraries by including an alphabetical arrangement for fiction, to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to find books;

XV. improve the organisation of activities for children under five and resources for their .. outdoor play.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Dalton St. Michael's C. E. (VA) Primary School is situated in the village of Dalton, near Wigan. Although situated in the ward of Parbold, only a few pupils are from that ward. Most pupils come from the Skelmersdale area. The majority of pupils are brought to school by private transport.

2. Children are admitted to school in the year during which they will reach the age of five. They have varying pre-school experience. The school operates a "Toddle In" group, a joint church and school initiative, which is run by parents on Friday afternoons, which welcomes pre-school children and their families. At the time of the inspection, there were 58 pupils on the school roll, with three children under five in the reception class. Pupils have varying prior experience and their attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

3. The school has identified 10 pupils as having special educational needs, which is broadly average. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most pupils are from white, European families. Three pupils are eligible for free school meals, representing five per cent of the school's population, which is well below average.

4. The school's aims are to provide a broad, balanced and relevant education, which caters for the whole child, in a secure and caring Christian environment. It aims to ensure all children can thrive, in their academic, personal, social and moral development. It aims to educate the children in Christian beliefs, whilst fostering respect and value for other religions and cultures.

5. The school's priorities include raising standards in pupil achievement, particularly in literacy, numeracy, information technology and health education. Priorities for 2001 are to develop a whole school curriculum map, along with the review of major policies, to retain Health Promoting School Status and to achieve a Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.

### Key Indicators

6. Due to the small number of pupils being assessed the school is not required to publish its National Curriculum results.

### Attendance

			%
Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year	Authorised	School	4.7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

		Number
Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

### Quality of teaching

		%
Percentage of teaching observed which is :	Very good or better	4
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

## .. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

7. In 1999, the number of pupils at both Year 2 and Year 6 was less than 10. It is not therefore appropriate to report national performance data for comparing the school's performance with national averages or the performance of pupils in similar schools.

8. When looking at previous results and giving consideration to the impact of pupils with special educational needs, these show that pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1. When comparing previous results, there has been a good improvement in standards achieved in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school.

9. On admission to the school, at the age of four, most children have average attainment. By the time they are five, most will have achieved the Desirable Learning Outcomes for their age in most areas of learning. Achievement is good in their early reading, writing and understanding of number and is satisfactory for their age in the areas of mathematics, speaking and listening, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development.

10. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection show that pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is satisfactory in most subjects. Pupils attain sound standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. A significant number achieve good standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. In English, pupils in the school make slow progress in developing an appropriate joined handwriting style. Pupils acquire appropriate skills in information technology and achieve standards that are expected for their age by the end of Key Stage 1. These standards reflect the results of the previous inspection. Standards attained in information technology by the end of Key Stage 2 are good.

11. Progress in reading has improved since the last inspection, due to the review of books available and the improvement in systems used for listening to pupils' reading. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils throughout the school make good progress in their independent reading. In some lessons seen Year 2 pupils had limited time to develop other reading skills, such as reading

for different purposes and learning to use a classification system to locate books. Pupils' progress in investigative work in science and mathematics is improved. Pupils now have good opportunities to undertake practical, investigative work. Information technology is now appropriately used to support pupils with special educational needs in their learning across the curriculum.

12. Pupils aged 11 attain sound standards in speaking and listening. By the end of Key Stage 2, they listen attentively and speak clearly. In writing, standards are satisfactory overall, though a small number of pupils with higher prior attainment write well. Reading standards are satisfactory overall, with a few pupils achieving high standards, reflecting their prior higher attainment. Overall, progress in both key stages is satisfactory in English. Progress in handwriting varies due to the lack of systematic teaching of this aspect of the subject.

13. In mathematics, pupils make sound progress and attain satisfactory standards in their numeracy skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have sound understanding of number, area, space and shape and they can appropriately apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve problems. A significant number have good mathematical knowledge and understanding.

14. In science, pupils develop good investigative skills, through the many investigative opportunities provided for them. They acquire sound understanding and can explain their experiments using appropriate scientific language. They record their work well. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding, in developing ways of obtaining and considering evidence and in communicating what they have learned in different ways.

15. Pupils' progress in information technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. By the time pupils are 11, they have made good progress in using computers to write, edit and compile documents. They use programs to find information, produce data and provide illustrations for a range of work.

16. Pupils make good progress in music across the school and achieve well. This shows an improvement in Key Stage 1, where standards were found to be average and progress was seen to be satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress in history. Progress is satisfactory in all other subjects at both key stages.

17. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. Good provision is made for their needs in reading and numeracy. Some individual education plans lack clear, measurable targets to inform teaching.

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

18. Pupils have good attitudes to their work overall. Most work hard and remain attentive throughout lessons and the school day. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and each other and when required offer their own ideas and opinions with enthusiasm. By the time pupils reach Key Stage 2, they have developed good independent learning skills. Pupils work well together in groups, or pairs, offering each other support and encouragement. In Key Stage 1, group work often requires close supervision to ensure pupils concentrate. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work and to celebrate their achievements. This is evident in the attractive displays of work throughout the school and by the way examples of good work are shared with other pupils.

19. Pupils' behaviour is good. It is consistently good in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, there are a few pupils whose behaviour and attitudes are sometimes less than appropriate. The teacher works hard to develop good attitudes and behaviour and there is strong support for this from the very good personal and social education programme. The success of this work is evident in the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils understand and respond well to the school's system of rewards and sanctions. The school rules are well understood, reflecting their prominence in daily school life. Conflict and bullying are rare and any that occurs is dealt with swiftly. Pupils are involved in appropriate discussions and are expected to make apologies for any inappropriate behaviour. There have been no exclusions in the past year, but suitable procedures are in place should the need arise.

20. Relationships throughout the school community are good. Teaching and non-teaching staff, governors and parents form a close and supportive team. This is reflected in the relationships between pupils and staff and amongst pupils themselves. Pupils of all ages generally work and play well together, with older pupils displaying a caring approach towards younger ones.

21. The personal development of pupils is very good. There is strong support for this from the comprehensive personal and social education programme. The importance placed upon this work can be seen in the work that pupils produce, for example in posters concerning respect and consideration for others. Pupils throughout the school are offered many opportunities to take responsibility, including classroom and lunchtime duties. Respect and understanding of the needs and values of others are considered and pupils support the work of many charities.

## **Attendance**

22. Levels of attendance are above national averages and are good. This represents an area of significant improvement since the last inspection. The school is notified about absences, most of which are largely due to childhood illnesses. Pupils generally arrive at school in good time. Registration periods are polite and efficient, leading promptly into the first lesson. The administrative arrangements are good and the school meets statutory requirements.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

23. The quality of teaching is good overall. It was consistently good and sometimes very good in Key Stage 2. Over one half of the lessons seen across the school were good, with the remainder being satisfactory. English and science are taught well in Key Stage 2, reflecting the expertise in science of the temporary teacher and headteacher's good knowledge of English. Teaching in history and mathematics is also good at Key Stage 2.

24. In the good and very good lessons, learning objectives were clearly explained to pupils. Tasks carefully built on prior learning and expectations were high. For example, in a literacy hour in Key Stage 2, pupils' prior work on newspaper reporting was used to highlight the main criteria for ensuring interest for readers. Pupils were skilfully questioned and guided towards effective reporting techniques. Lessons were well organised and managed and discipline was effective. Good opportunities were provided for pupils to discuss their work, to answer and to ask questions and to share ideas.

25. Where teaching was satisfactory, most lessons had appropriate introductions, with clear explanations of subsequent tasks. In some lessons in Key Stage 1, pupils lacked sustained concentration. This was sometimes due to the disruption caused by a few pupils who lacked understanding of the need to take turns when answering. At other times, some pupils lost interest because work was insufficiently challenging for those with higher prior attainment.

26. Teachers' plans show appropriate continuity and progression of work, following the programmes of study. Literacy and numeracy plans appropriately identify work for pupils with differing prior attainment. This is not reflected in the planning of work in other subjects, where assessment is insufficiently used to inform future work for all pupils. In most lessons, in other subjects, tasks are planned only for different year groups.

27. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and understanding. The school benefits from the specialist knowledge of teachers in music and science. The new Key Stage 1 teacher is developing strategies for working with

the wide age range of pupils in the class.

28. Pupils with special educational needs receive good individual support from teachers and support staff. Their work in literacy and numeracy is usually carefully matched to their prior attainment and good use is made of computers to support pupils' learning. Some individual education plans lack precise targets that can be systematically developed. In other subjects, resources are not always clearly suited to pupils' prior attainment.

29. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory overall. The new teacher is committed to providing children with a good range of learning experiences and is well supported by the nursery assistant. The teacher recognises the need to review the overall organisation of teaching in the mixed age class and to further improve the management of the class.

30. Homework is appropriately used to reinforce learning at Key Stage 1. Parents are supportive, such as in regularly listening to their children's reading. Good use is made of homework at Key Stage 2, where, for example, pupils are encouraged to read, to learn spellings and to undertake some independent research to support their work in school.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

31. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and health education. Sex education and the awareness of the dangers of drugs are taught through the science programme, with specific sex education being taught discretely to pupils in Years 5 and 6. Time is appropriately allocated for teaching different subjects.

32. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs. Individual education plans show information about pupils' needs, but vary in quality. In some instances, objectives are too general, providing limited guidance for planning work for these pupils. This reflects the judgements of the previous inspection, which highlighted the lack of sufficiently specific targets to allow for accurate assessment of progress.

33. The curriculum policies are generally satisfactory, though some, such as science, are out of date. The mathematics policy does not yet reflect the inclusion of the numeracy hour. The history policy is in draft form. The information technology policy is very new, though it is being used effectively. The school has established planning for the literacy and numeracy hours, which provides clear progression and continuity across the school. Planning for science appropriately ensures all programmes of study are taught. The school has taken considerable steps to improve the science curriculum, which, at the

time of the last inspection, was seen to lack sufficient opportunities for experimentation and investigation. In addition to providing good opportunities for pupils to develop these skills in lessons, the school takes part in national science award schemes and encourages pupils to join the after school science club, which is capably led by the school secretary.

34. At Key Stages 1 and 2, schemes of work for other subjects incorporate guidance from national schemes. These generally form the basis for teachers' plans and will be used until new national guidance is received in the year 2000. The school plans much of its work through topics, which provide a suitable balance across subjects over the school year. However, the geography programme does not clearly show the progression of skills through the school. Lesson objectives are clearly shown on plans and show different tasks for pupils in the mixed year classes but work is not always sufficiently clearly identified for pupils with differing prior attainment. Planning for children under five appropriately indicates experiences for children in all areas of learning.

35. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. For Key Stage 2 pupils, there is a science club, which is affiliated to a national network of youth science clubs. After school clubs, such as cookery and sport, are run by voluntary helpers, including friends, parents and governors.

36. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory, overall. The assessment policy provides appropriate guidance on procedures. National and standardised tests are used to assess performance and to monitor progress through the school. Results are analysed to determine future targets. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in the assessment process, by evaluating their own performance in different subjects at the end of each year. The new marking policy provides good guidance to teachers for using a consistent approach, which includes providing constructive comments to help pupils to improve their work. During the inspection, effective marking was consistently seen in the Key Stage 2 class.

37. Teachers use informal assessment books to record day-to-day progress in a variety of work. Early assessment of children in the reception class is undertaken, though planning does not clearly indicate that this information is being used to inform future teaching. Similarly, whilst opportunities for assessment are indicated in Key Stage 1 and 2 plans, work is not always planned for pupils with differing prior attainment. The scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that, overall, most work is planned for pupils in the different year groups.

38. Appropriately, examples of pupils' work are collected and placed in their records of achievement, with pupils being encouraged to select what they feel are good representations of their work. Work in pupils' records of achievement does not clearly show their progression across the school, with limited



information and dates being indicated.

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

39. The provision for moral and social development is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. The school has clear aims and values and promotes positive attitudes and good behaviour. The school has developed an awareness of a multicultural society, though this is not fully integrated across the curriculum.

40. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted through appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect on matters of consequence and importance in their lives. The work in personal and social education has created an environment in the school where pupils feel safe in talking about things that matter to them. Much of the spiritual development is promoted through religious education and topic work that give pupils an understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. Work in science, art and literature provides the pupils with opportunities to explore their own ideas and to find ways of expressing them, in forms appropriate to their age and experience. Visits to places of interest provide the pupils with wider experience and opportunities to wonder about different places. Some opportunity for reflection is provided in the daily assemblies.

41. Pupils' moral development is very well promoted. It is supported by a good behaviour policy, which aims to develop the pupils' self-esteem and self-motivation. The pupils have been involved in the discussion of the classroom rules, which are prominently displayed in each class. The behaviour policy and its practice develop the pupils' understanding of right and wrong. Some pupils at Key Stage 1 sometimes require further support in managing their behaviour. Pupils are encouraged in personal and social education to discuss their feelings and other moral matters. The personal and social education sessions are an effective way of dealing with matters, such as bullying. Opportunities are also provided in a number of topics, such as environmental issues or issues in history or literature, where the pupils explore questions of right and wrong in different contexts. Pupils are encouraged to be courteous and caring and show respect for themselves and others. They are involved in raising money for charities, such as those supporting illnesses and children.

42. The programme for personal and social development is very good and enables the pupils to develop an awareness of the demands made upon individuals by the society in which they live. They learn how to be at ease with one another and to welcome the give and take of social living. This understanding is developed in practical ways, such as by providing entertainment for the wider community and taking part in parish festivals and

events. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the community of the school and older pupils are encouraged to care for the needs and interests of the younger pupils.

43. The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their own cultural traditions and those of others, through their studies in art, geography, history and music. Music contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Many musical performances have been held for the community, such as in the nearby shopping centre and in the church. Pupils have performed a range of plays, including, for example, "The Wizard of Oz" and they express enjoyment of a range of cultural events. A good variety of information about the works of different artists is used well to support pupils' understanding of different styles and techniques, past and present. The school plans outside visits to broaden pupils' outlook. For example, the school has links with inner city schools, to support pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures in modern day Britain. There are good plans to further enhance provision, such as through a proposed visit to a Hindu temple.

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

44. The school provides a happy and caring environment. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupil's academic and personal progress. A variety of tests and assessments provide information for individual records and these are used to inform target setting, although this system is at an early stage. Pupils are all well known and well supported by the good relationships that exist. Pupils with special educational needs or personal difficulties are treated with sensitivity and understanding. Pupils are well prepared for life outside school, with appropriate sex and drugs education. There are good policies in place, which represents an improvement since the last inspection. Meetings and visits ensure that children make a happy start to their school life and a smooth transfer to the next stage of their education. The youngest children benefit from the opportunity to attend school for a morning session, in the half term before they begin school and are given activity boxes to take home. A weekly session is held for parents and toddlers and this allows children to become familiar with the school surroundings and pupils.

45. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There is a good detailed policy that is consistently followed. There are rewards for good work and behaviour and suitable sanctions for any unacceptable behaviour. Most pupils understand and follow the school rules, reflecting their involvement in forming them, though a few Key Stage 1 pupils require further support in managing their behaviour in some lessons. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and the school meets statutory requirements efficiently.

46. There are good arrangements for child protection. There is a clear policy, the staff are suitably trained and have good awareness. The arrangements for promoting the health, safety and well being of all in school are good. There is a comprehensive policy and good daily practice. This is also an area of improvement since the last inspection.

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

47. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciative of the education provided for their children. They are especially pleased with the encouragement they receive to become involved in the life of the school, with the values and attitudes taught and the happiness of their children. Parents provide good support for their children's learning. They provide much help in school with extra-curricular clubs, with reading and other activities. For example, they are currently supporting a project which is involving pupils in designing and making a Millennium banner. Homework is well supported and good use is made of reading record books. There is an active and successful Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association that provides additional resources and support for educational visits.

48. The quality of information provided for parents is good. There is a school brochure, a governors' annual report and regular letters. These are all well written and informative. Parents receive information about the literacy and numeracy hours and some information about forthcoming topics. In Key Stage 1, the provision of greater detail about the work that pupils are doing has been well received. Reporting on pupils' progress is made at termly consultation events and through written reports in the summer term. These give clear information about successes and difficulties and give guidance for future improvement. Where appropriate, test results are included and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

49. The links with the community are good. They provide support for the curriculum and enrich pupils' lives. Links with the church have been strengthened since the last inspection. Pupils take part in services, concerts and productions, all of which are well attended by parents and friends. Members of the church are regular visitors to the school and school news is included in the parish magazine. Other visitors to school provide support for the curriculum and have included a poet, librarian and environmental health officer. Members of the health and emergency services provide good support for the school's personal and social education programme. Pupils make visits to places of interest, for example, to theatre productions and a variety of workshops at the Beacon Country Park.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

## **Leadership and management**

50. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a strong commitment to the school and is clearly dedicated to the improvement of the quality of education provided and the children in her care. There is a clear educational direction for the school and effective day-to-day management. The critical reflection by the headteacher on the work of the school in both teaching and learning is good. The headteacher has limited non-teaching time, which has been used to co-ordinate and monitor the curriculum effectively. Some policies are still in draft form.

51. The governing body is effective and is keen to improve its involvement in all school issues. Governors have no formal systems in place to evaluate the effects of developments on raising standards of attainment. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and take an active part in school life in areas such as health and safety, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and financial decision making. They meet regularly and there is an appropriate structure of committees. They have been involved appropriately in supporting the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

52. The school has responded satisfactorily to the issues raised in the previous inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement. In the period since the last inspection, there have been significant staff changes and a period of extended absence of the headteacher. The school produced a clear action plan in response to the last inspection report and has begun to successfully address all the issues raised. It has improved provision for investigative work in mathematics and science and has improved the teaching of reading at Key Stage 2. It has monitored progress in these areas and recognises the need to continue to develop the use of assessment for diagnostic purposes, to assist in target setting and to inform planning for future learning.

53. The school development plan covers the school's current development priorities but does not establish a strategic view of the school's development in future years. There is a satisfactory system in place, involving all staff and governors in establishing needs for inclusion in the school development plan and identifying priorities. This has formed the basis of an effective action plan with valuable, achievable goals, which has outlined the main needs for development within the current academic year. The school recognises the need to develop a longer-term plan to cover a period beyond the current academic year. Staff work hard to implement the school's aims, policies and values successfully. Parents agree that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.

54. Co-ordination of the school's curriculum and aspects of school life are

suitably delegated, although much curriculum development work is undertaken jointly. The curriculum co-ordinators have defined roles, although these have been revised in the light of recent staff changes.

55. Annual reviews for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are properly managed by the school and planned in advance. There is also a designated governor for special educational needs who keeps in contact with the school on a regular basis. The governing body is kept informed about issues involving special educational needs. They meet their statutory reporting obligations in the annual report to parents. Governors are kept well informed about special educational needs.

56. The recently appointed Key Stage 1 teacher has responsibility for the provision for children under five. Appropriate consideration is made of children's attainment on entry, using the recently introduced baseline assessment.

57. Staff development is managed effectively. Relationships and communication between teachers are good and there are appropriate meetings to ensure that staff are involved in, and informed of, decisions. In-service training is managed effectively and plans to implement effective staff appraisal are to be revised, following recent staffing appointments.

58. The ethos of the school is good and there is a positive, hard working and caring attitude among staff and pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good.

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

59. The school has had an unexpected change in teaching staff, with two teachers leaving in the last school term. Consequently, one teacher has recently joined the school as the infant teacher and a temporary teacher shares the teaching of the Key Stage 2 class with the headteacher. At the time of the inspection, therefore, two out of the three teachers were new to the school. Nevertheless, the school has a good number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. Job descriptions are in place for current staff and will be negotiated for the new member of staff, when appointed. Teachers are effectively deployed and

their individual expertise is used well to benefit pupils. For example, the part time teacher teaches music throughout the school, whilst the temporary teacher teaches science to pupils in Key Stage 2.

60. Appraisal has been undertaken and will continue once the new teacher takes up her appointment. The school has a clear staff development policy, which promotes professional development as an entitlement for all staff.

Teachers have suitable opportunities to undertake training and to observe good practice. Appropriate procedures are in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers.

61. The provision of support staff is good. Non-teaching staff are effectively deployed to support pupils and the school benefits from the voluntary support it receives from parents and friends, such as in teaching design and technology, art and sports. Some governors also support the school by working with small groups of pupils. The school secretary has generous time to carry out her duties, which ensures the smooth running of day-to-day administrative duties. She also contributes time voluntarily to after school activities, by running the science club. Lunchtime and caretaking staff provide good support to the school.

62. The school building has been extensively refurbished to provide appropriate teaching space. However, as seen at the time of the previous inspection, the lack of a school hall limits the teaching of some aspects of physical education. Teachers plan carefully to ensure lessons can be adapted when there are adverse weather conditions that limit the use of the outside area. The accommodation is well maintained and display is used effectively to enhance the interior. There is an adequate outside hard play area, though there is little apparatus for the youngest children for their outdoor play.

63. Resources are generally good. The school is generously supported by the Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association, whose fund-raising has enhanced provision in many areas, including books for the libraries, computers and software and equipment for construction activities. Good use is made of other resources available to the school, including the voluntary support provided by members of the community. Suitable use is made of outside resources, such as places of interest, to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.

## .. **The efficiency of the school**

64. The financial management of the school is good and the effective financial committee of the governing body frequently monitors the school's finances. The day-to-day financial management of the school's funds is carried out efficiently by both the school administrator and the headteacher. Proper procedures and safeguards are followed and the recommendations of the most recent audit have been effectively and swiftly carried out.

65. The budget process is initiated from historical precedents by the headteacher and administrator and then is fully discussed and finalised by the finance committee before approval by the governing body. Additional funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are used effectively to provide good support. The governing body receives regular financial reports

from the school and uses the information effectively. The school is projecting a deficit budget for the current financial year, meeting the balance from its reserves to maintain current staffing levels. Funds from the Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association are also used well and accounts are appropriately audited. Major purchases are carefully made with a view to cost effectiveness.

66. Staff are generally deployed efficiently and financial resources are used effectively to maintain provision and fund new developments. The accommodation is used well. Some interesting displays of pupils' work and information in a range of forms enhance the environment and provide stimulation and interest for pupils and parents. The available space is organised well and resources are easily accessible. Resources are used well to support learning. Good use is made of visits into the community and visitors to the school and these enhance and enrich the curriculum. Time is mostly used efficiently. Lessons usually start and finish punctually. Overall efficiency in all aspects of school management is good.

67. Given the good quality of teaching overall, the careful use of funds, the satisfactory progress of pupils throughout the school, set against the funds received for their education and the good leadership and management of the school, it gives good value for money.

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

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

68. Children under five are taught in the reception, Year 1 and 2 class. At the time of the inspection, three children were under five. Children's attainment on entry reflects their varying prior experience and early assessment shows that most have slightly above average attainment in reading, writing and early mathematics. By the age of five, most children in the current year are likely to achieve beyond the desirable learning outcomes in reading, writing and number. They are likely to achieve the desirable learning outcomes for their age in the areas of mathematics, speaking and listening, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Their personal and social development is satisfactory.

69. In their personal and social development, children are helped to settle to school routines by learning to co-operate with others, such as in sharing materials. They show consideration towards one another and begin to show independence, such as in collecting materials. They sometimes lack sufficient opportunities to develop independence by selecting activities. Children show enthusiasm and a willingness to take part in class discussions. They concentrate well and take pride in their work. This was seen, for example, where pupils successfully wrote individual letters of the alphabet and then attempted to copy write simple captions.

70. In language and literacy, children make good progress in developing their early reading and writing skills. They understand the direction of pages in a book, recognise that a book has a title and make good use of the illustrations to gain meaning. Several children recognise a few individual letters of the alphabet. Most children can copy letters with appropriate control and understand that there is a correct way to form letters and numbers. All children can write their names independently. Those with lower prior attainment make their early marks to communicate their ideas. Most children have appropriate speaking skills and can communicate their thoughts and ideas. Those with more hesitant speech are carefully encouraged to contribute to discussions, supported well by the nursery assistant. Early listening skills are satisfactory overall, though a few children have yet to appreciate the need for listening carefully and taking turns to answer.

71. Children make good progress in their understanding of number, in their early mathematical skills. Many can count up to 20 and recognise numbers up to 10. A few can add two numbers within 10. Most can sort, match and compare size and they recognise most colours. They recognise and name simple shapes, such as a circle and a square.



72. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is appropriate for their age. They begin to recognise the importance of their senses, such as the function of their tongues to taste bitter, sweet and salty foods, where they can express likes and dislikes. Children understand the main features of their immediate locality and recognise that things change over a period of time. They understand the use of control, such as when using the computer.

73. In the physical area of learning, children show increasing control of their movements, such as when playing on the marked games areas in the playground, where they move around a route. In games, they show sound progress in controlling a ball, such as when learning to kick a ball to a partner. In the designated optician's corner, children manipulate the telephone digits, write appointments and handle the spectacles for sale with appropriate dexterity. They use building equipment, fitting pieces together carefully and make good patterns with small construction materials.

74. Children's creative development is satisfactory. Children learn to handle brushes and pencils well and show good observational skills, such as when painting self-portraits. They learn to mix colours and to use a range of materials, including paper, fabric and modelling material. In music, children show good awareness of rhythm and learn to sing in tune. Their creative skills in some aspects, such as role-play, are not fully developed, due to limited opportunities provided for them to develop themes through dialogue.

75. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The new teacher provides a caring environment and is supported well by the trained nursery assistant. Planning appropriately details experiences for children in all areas of learning, with the exception of planned opportunities for outdoor play. The recent baseline assessments are being used to monitor children's attainment and progress, but do not yet fully inform planning. The teacher is conscientious, but has limited experience in teaching children under five. Within the short time since her appointment, a good start has been made in planning and reviewing the needs of the children. The teacher is aware of the need to consider further organisational strategies to improve the quality of the provision for the youngest children in the class.

76. The accommodation is good for children under five. There is a spacious classroom and an additional area outside the classroom where activities are developed. Resources available are of good quality. There are suitably designated areas for different activities, such as writing, reading and role-play, but children had no opportunities for using water or sand, or for outdoor play, during the inspection.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

77. The performance of pupils aged 7 and 11 in the 1999 National Curriculum assessments cannot be reported and compared to national averages, due to the small numbers of pupils taking the tests. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, attainment at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory in reading and writing. In 1996, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' results in the subject were less than satisfactory. During the last four years there has been a significant improvement in pupils' attainment, with a high proportion of pupils achieving satisfactory standards.

78. From a broadly average attainment on entry to the school, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. During the inspection, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1, was satisfactory overall. Almost half of the pupils attained well in reading, reflecting the school's strong focus on improving this aspect since the last inspection. The standard of handwriting was less satisfactory, with no pupils using a joined script by the end of Year 2.

79. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing is satisfactory overall. A few pupils with higher prior attainment achieve well in all aspects. Pupils' attainment does not indicate slow progress since the end of Key Stage 1, but reflects their varying prior attainment, including that of the pupils with special educational needs. Slow progress is made in handwriting and most pupils do not develop an appropriate joined style until the later part of Key Stage 2. This reflects the lack of a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting.

80. In speaking and listening, pupils make satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 1, appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to answer questions, discuss their work and make suggestions. For example, pupils are given clear instructions to listen attentively to the explanations about their senses and to describe how they are used. A few pupils lack awareness of the need to take turns when answering questions. In some instances, older pupils in the class become restless and do not listen attentively when whole class discussions are insufficiently relevant to their age and their prior attainment. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop appropriate speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively and speak confidently by the time they are 11. Good examples of effective speaking and listening skills were seen in most lessons, including for example, pupils' work about newspaper reports. Here, the skilful questioning encouraged pupils to collaboratively devise a headline and report about a fictional major discovery in their locality.

81. In reading, pupils benefit from the good range of books and other reading

materials available, which have been provided to promote reading for enjoyment.

Pupils in Year 1 can predict and anticipate likely words, such as when reading the big book, "Handa's Surprise", during the literacy hour. They recognise rhyming words, such as when reading "The Sandwich that Max Made" and show appropriate comprehension of simple stories. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils read with appropriate accuracy and increasing fluency. Most read aloud with suitable expression and show enjoyment of their reading books. A few pupils with higher prior attainment have reading books that are too easy, in relation to their capability. Pupils make good progress in their independent reading. Progress in reading for different purposes sometimes varies in lessons, usually where older pupils lack sufficient challenge. In some lessons seen, Year 2 pupils were included in introductions to work for the younger pupils in the class, limiting the time available for them to develop their reading skills. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have limited understanding of using a classification system to locate books.

82. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to read from a wide range of material. They develop satisfactory comprehension skills and show increasing understanding of different types of writing, including poems, accounts, reports and descriptions. They learn about authors' styles and their use of particular vocabulary to interest the reader. For example, pupils in Year 3 showed good understanding of the impact of some verbs, in their study of the historical novel, "Raiders". Their comprehension skills are good. By Year 5, pupils show good understanding of factual and narrative writing. They recognise different ways in which writing is enhanced, such as by the use of alliteration, for example, when studying reporters' techniques for creating effective headlines. By the end of the key stage, pupils' reading is satisfactory overall, though a few pupils attain well, reflecting their prior attainment.

83. Pupils' writing is satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1. The younger pupils develop good recognition of letters and simple words and can form letters correctly. Pupils in Year 1 write simple sentences, but these are not always appropriately punctuated with a capital letter and a full stop. By Year 2, most pupils write sentences containing simple conjunctions, such as "and, but, then and so". Most are punctuated appropriately. Pupils' spelling is satisfactory and they are suitably encouraged to use a dictionary when required. By the end of the key stage, no pupils have developed a joined script. Similarly, most pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to print. Pupils' writing shows good improvement as they move through Key Stage 2. Sentences become more elaborate and pupils write increasingly more interesting stories, which contain dialogue. Those with higher prior attainment use a range of vocabulary to make their stories interesting to the reader. Pupils regularly write reviews of books they have read, often showing good ability to summarise a story. Work is presented well. The provision of a good range of reading and writing activities ensures that pupils are interested and enjoy the subject.

84. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in English, overall. They make good progress in reading, supported by the good range of reading materials provided. The school has a selection of books that is specifically aimed at supporting the needs of pupils with lower prior reading attainment, which effectively reinforces pupils' learning. In some instances, individual education plans do not clearly identify targets for these pupils.

85. Most pupils in the school respond well to English. They enjoy the time given to reading big books during the literacy hour, where they are always willing to answer questions. In some lessons, in the Key Stage 1 class, some pupils had difficulty in maintaining concentration. At times, older pupils in the class showed limited interest, particularly where they undertook insufficiently challenging work.

86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The literacy hour is well planned throughout the school. Good links are often made across subjects, such as in reading historical novels to reinforce pupils' learning about the past. Overall, resources are used well. At Key Stage 2, pupils are well managed and organised, but this is not consistently so in the Key Stage 1 class, where the teacher is new and is developing her experience in working with the wide age group. In the best lessons, introductions are good, the pace remains brisk and pupils are suitably challenged. Aims are clearly explained and pupils are encouraged to contribute their ideas. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good overall and expectations are high, particularly for the oldest pupils. The headteacher has good expertise, which often reflects the stimulating work provided for pupils in Key Stage 2.

87. The literacy hour has been well established, supported by the headteacher's commitment to ensuring good provision of resources and suitable planning. The recent changes in the teaching staff have had some effect in organisational terms, but new staff show a strong commitment to continuing to provide a good English curriculum. Resources and the accommodation for the subject are good. The good class libraries would benefit from a better classification systems to support pupils' book retrieval skills.

## **Mathematics**

88. Due to the small number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 1999, it is not appropriate to report pupils' attainment against national averages and the averages for similar schools. Although figures for a small school need to be approached with caution, statistical evidence indicates that from 1996 to 1999, standards in mathematics have been maintained at a satisfactory level and this is supported by inspection findings. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in pupils' attainment and has developed good strategies, particularly in numeracy, to help achieve these targets.

89. Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. During the inspection, standards for the majority of pupils were satisfactory for most pupils at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, a significant number of pupils attain standards that are good and above those expected for pupils of their age. The school successfully follows a well-planned and balanced programme that covers and regularly reinforces all the required areas of mathematics. It effectively meets the needs of all the pupils with differing prior attainment, including those with special educational needs.

90. Progress is at least satisfactory and is consistent between key stages. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory as they are set clear targets and effective monitoring of their progress is carried out.

91. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop number skills, using increasingly larger numbers within different and more challenging situations. They count in twos, fives and tens, forwards and backwards and use the four rules of number with increasingly large sums. They sort, arrange and order objects and match them with numbers to create sets. Most of the younger pupils can estimate accurately in measurement, such as when they predicted how many cubes would

balance plastic fruits. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand how to double numbers and recognise the value of digits in two digit numbers. They use mathematics in a varied range of real life or imaginary situations with increasing accuracy.

92. At Key Stage 2, pupils count, add, subtract, multiply and divide with numbers up to 100. They gather, sort and record data in a variety of ways. They create and read from different sorts of graphs. They recognise a number of common two- and three-dimensional figures and they talk about mathematics with confidence. They recognise relationships between numbers and use their skills to develop mathematics in a number of situations. They develop strategies for dealing with the four rules of number in mental mathematics and deal with large numbers or measures, including time. By the end of the key stage, pupils can undertake calculations in a variety of ways. An example was seen when they determined the most efficient way to work out problems associated with purchasing equipment from an office catalogue.

93. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Their work is planned to be similar to that undertaken by the rest of the class, but at appropriate levels of difficulty or complexity, so that their progress is maintained and their confidence enhanced. Some pupils with particular mathematical talents, particularly at Key Stage 2, are given special attention and work to enable them to work successfully towards their potential.

94. The pupils' attainment in numeracy has been positively enhanced by the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The pupils have good facility with number and work out a variety of types of mathematical problems mentally. They gather, sort and handle data, presenting their results in increasingly sophisticated ways. This includes the effective use of information technology. They readily use mathematics within other subjects in the curriculum, such as in measurement in science.

95. Pupils in both key stages generally work well in mathematics lessons. At Key Stage 2, they settle to work quickly and concentrate for long periods of time. There is some disturbance at Key Stage 1, when pupils change activities from whole class to group work. However, the pupils work well together, particularly at Key Stage 2. They share resources and information generously. The pupils generally enjoy the subject and respond well to lessons that are well planned and delivered appropriately.

96. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory or better. The teaching of Key Stage 1 pupils is at least satisfactory, with some good lessons and at Key Stage 2 it is good, particularly for the older pupils. The teachers are confident in their knowledge of mathematics and generally have high expectations of the quality of work. Planning is well matched to the National Numeracy Strategy and is well structured. Homework is sometimes set to follow up work begun in class. This is usually effectively commented upon to encourage the pupils.

97. Good use is made of support staff in mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 1. Resources available for mathematics are good in range and quality and meet the needs of the curriculum. The co-ordination of the subject is to be assumed by a new member of staff taking up appointment in January 2000.

98. Assessment procedures are good and the results of the standard tests given at 7 and 11 and other assessments are recorded. The mathematics policy does not yet reflect the current pattern of teaching. Considerable effort has already been put into establishing the numeracy initiative.

99. In the last inspection report, investigative work in mathematics was identified as an area requiring development. The school has successfully and effectively addressed this issue and pupils regularly undertake practical, investigative work in mathematics.

## **Science**

100. Due to the small numbers of pupils who were assessed by teacher

assessments at the age of 7 and those aged 11 who undertook National Curriculum assessments in 1999, these results cannot be published. However, attainment in science has steadily improved over the last four years and most pupils achieved appropriate standards for their age by the end of both key stages.

101. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Evidence gained from observations, the scrutiny of work, displayed work and from teachers' planning shows that attainment in science is satisfactory by the end of both key stages.

102. At Key Stage 1, where pupils learn about their senses, younger pupils can describe different tastes and begin to be aware that the sense of smell affects the sense of taste. Older pupils in the class can classify foods that are sweet, sour, bitter and salty. Following a broadcast about smell and taste, older pupils can recall how the nose detects a smell. Those with higher prior attainment explain this effectively, using good scientific vocabulary. In a further lesson, which linked science with personal and social education, Year 2 pupils showed good understanding of the dangers of substance abuse, recognising that some substances can be good for some people, but harmful to others. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good understanding of their senses.

103. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop understanding of electricity, recognising that a circuit needs to be complete to light a bulb. Their practical investigations help them to understand that some materials conduct electricity and that others are insulators. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a secure understanding of electrical circuits and symbols used to represent these. Pupils can confidently draw diagrams of electrical circuits. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe their work.

104. Progress in science is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop appropriate understanding of life and living processes, through the systematic programme which leads them from studying their bodies to plant and animal life. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop appropriate understanding of life and living processes, materials, forces and the earth and their environment. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 can clearly describe the conditions required for plant and animal life and enthusiastically described the habitats in which snails survive!

105. Pupils respond well overall. Pupils undertake investigations with enthusiasm. They share resources and work well co-operatively. The older pupils in the school show a sensible approach to practical work, are conscientious and show increasing independence and ability to use their initiative. Whilst Key Stage 1 pupils show interest, a few sometimes lack self-control and sustained concentration.

106. The quality of teaching is often good. It is consistently good in Key Stage 2, where teachers have particular expertise in the subject. Lessons are generally well planned and resourced. Plans show clear progression and opportunities to reinforce pupils' prior learning. Activities are well organised and managed and, in the best lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged. Good explanations are provided and pupils have good

opportunities to investigate. This reflects the school's good action taken since the last inspection, where investigative work was seen to be limited. In the satisfactory lessons, pupils sometimes had insufficient opportunities to discuss their work.

107. The science policy is satisfactory. There is a good scheme of work for science, which provides continuity and progression throughout the school. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of each topic and examples of their work are kept in their records of achievement. Progress is monitored and pupils' achievements are recorded in the assessment file. The school runs a science club for older pupils, which is led by the secretary who is a science graduate. The science club is a member of a national association and pupils are encouraged to take part in the award system for their investigative work. Resources and the accommodation are good for science.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **.. Information technology**

108. Standards are good and slightly above those expected for pupils aged 11 and satisfactory for pupils aged 7. Progress is satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 1 and good for pupils at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages.

109. At Key Stage 1, pupils use the keyboard and mouse with increasing confidence and produce good quality word-processed work. Pupils in the reception year handle the computers in the classroom with ease and confidence. The pupils in Key Stage 1 confidently use other apparatus, such as tape players. They become well aware of the uses of computers in everyday life. Satisfactory progress is made throughout the key stage.

110. At Key Stage 2, the pupils develop good skills in handling information technology and make good progress. They broaden the areas of their expertise and increase the facility with which they carry out both simple and complex procedures. They use information technology as a tool to enable further discoveries and they write, edit and compile documents. They also devise their own sets of questions to elicit programmable information and turn data into appropriate graphs. Pupils use information technology to make illustrations for



their own poems and other pieces of writing. They use the CD-ROM for accessing information in other subjects in the curriculum, such as the history of the Romans. They also use CD encyclopaedias for finding out more about topics they are studying.

111. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate levels of support so that they can develop their skills and independence in using information technology. Computers are used well to support their learning across the curriculum, fully addressing this area of weakness that was found at the time of the last inspection.

112. The pupils respond very well to the opportunities that are provided in information technology. They take turns with the apparatus and are supportive of each other's endeavours. The highest attaining pupils make helpful suggestions to enable their colleagues to succeed or improve their performance.

113. Evidence from the work being undertaken by the pupils throughout the school indicates that the quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The little direct teaching that was observed in Key Stage 2 was good. Both class teachers and support staff contribute to the pupils' instruction in information technology and the pupils help each other considerably. Understanding of information technology and its teaching is at least sound and frequently good.

114. The hardware is well organised and good opportunities are provided for the pupils to work on the computers. The use of the resources is well managed. The number and range of resources, both hardware and software, are good so that the pupils develop their skills on a number of types of machine. Information technology is used very well to support other subjects within the curriculum. For example, pupils have produced interesting information about the Romans in their study of invaders.

115. The school has good plans for the extension of information technology provision through national and local authority initiatives and the work achieved up to the present time is a good preparation for this. There has been a significant improvement both in the quality of provision and standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 since the last inspection.

## .. **Art**

116. During the inspection, no lessons were seen in art, due to the organisation of the timetable. From the evidence provided, which included the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff and the quality of display, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in art throughout the school.

117. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop appropriate skills in using paint and crayons to make patterns and to produce portraits of themselves. They learn to mix colours and study those that create warm colours. Pupils use a variety of materials, such as tissue paper, to make collage pictures. As part of their topic work, they have made figures from art straws and glue and show increasing ability to observe closely. Plans show that pupils will continue to develop their skills in line and tone, such as when observing and drawing vegetables. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to learn to appreciate the work of famous artists, such as Vincent van Gogh.

118. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their understanding of line, tone, colour and shape, such as in their work on abstracts, which involved the use of horizontal, vertical and sloping lines. Their mathematical understanding was used to make symmetrical designs, using paper and crayons as materials. Pupils have produced effective posters, to illustrate positive behaviour.

119. The school has embarked on a major art project, which also combines the development of pupils' designing and making skills. A Millennium banner is being made to decorate a classroom. This has been designed by pupils throughout the school and involves pupils in learning many different skills, including embroidery. The banner incorporates themes in religious education and involves pupils in learning about their locality's history. It involves two and three-dimensional work, studies of natural and man-made materials and the designing and making of images and objects. Progress in this work is good and pupils' sketchbooks show good work. Assessment is informal, with examples of pupils' work being included in pupils' records of achievement.

120. Appropriate progression and continuity is provided throughout the school, supported by a suitable programme. Resources are good and include a wealth of books, posters, photographs and other information. The school has acquired many good quality photographs and prints by different artists, to enhance pupils' knowledge of the styles used in various periods, from the past to the present day. The accommodation is good. Attractive and informative displays enhance the building.

#### .. **Design and technology**

121. There was limited opportunity to observe lessons in design and technology during the inspection. Evidence was gained from medium term planning, lesson plans, photographs, display, pupils' work and discussion with teachers and pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their age and ability. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with appropriate support to enable them to make satisfactory progress.

122. At Key Stage 1, pupils use appropriate tools with confidence and come to recognise the benefits of planning what they intend to do. The work in design

and technology is related to the topics that they are studying and designing and making skills are progressively introduced. For example, pupils designed and made spectacle frames, linked to their work in science about the sense of sight. The pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about mechanisms and structures through working with construction toys and apparatus. They know about simple joining techniques and use measuring and cutting tools with increasing accuracy. They know the safe way to handle tools and how to work with them. Pupils talk confidently about what they are doing and why they choose to do it in a particular way, for example, when baking biscuits. There are close links between art and design and technology at Key Stage 1, to reinforce pupils' skills and understanding of both subjects.

123. At Key Stage 2, pupils show increasing sophistication in designing and making the objects they have designed. For example, in extending their studies of the Romans, the pupils designed and made a range of clay models based on a study of photographs and artefacts. Pupils use a variety of media in their construction activities.

124. Pupils respond positively to the design and technology work provided for them. They work both co-operatively and individually and they discuss and evaluate their own and others' work with openness.

125. There is suitable planning for design and technology. The teachers have an appropriate knowledge of the subject, the various techniques involved and of the way pupils develop skills in handling tools and designing. Plans show that support staff and helpers are generally used effectively. The teachers have appropriate expectations of the pupils.

126. The subject is effectively planned into the curriculum map of the school. The resources available for design and technology are satisfactory for the curriculum provided. Volunteer helpers contribute well to work in design and technology, such as in the major project to make a Millennium banner. Health and safety requirements are observed and appropriate attention is given to hygiene when handling food.

## .. **Geography**

127. Geography was not being taught during the inspection. Evidence collected from the scrutiny of work, planning and discussions with both staff and pupils, indicates that by the end of both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

128. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know that weather has an effect on the types of clothes they wear and the activities they can do outside. They discuss the subject of weather using appropriate vocabulary. Skills in mapwork are

developed appropriately, beginning with looking at maps of their locality on which they locate their home and route to school. Pupils recognise familiar features of their own locality and can compare them with others.

129. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils confidently discuss symbols to depict differences in the weather and know how to use maps and plans satisfactorily. They are able to use co-ordinates to find specific features on a map and know how to identify these through the use of geographical symbols. Pupils pose questions, investigate places and explore themes, using appropriate geographical vocabulary. Through looking at important buildings in their study of the village and from visits to places such as Skelmersdale, pupils develop an understanding of how the village is different from larger towns. Pupils link their studies of weather to their work on rivers when they explain about the water cycle. They develop an awareness of environmental issues. Planning indicates that contrasting areas to their village are studied, including a village in India and the coastal resort of Southport.

130. Pupils enjoy learning about the world around them. They enjoy finding out information for themselves and reporting their discoveries. From their work in history, such as in studying Roman sites, they reinforce their knowledge of the reasons for settlement, such as the proximity to sea and river routes.

131. The curriculum map provides an outline plan of when topics related to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum will be taught. This ensures that pupils have the opportunity to study each topic at least once during each key stage. The school has adopted a national scheme for the subject, which informs planning but this is not supported by a scheme of work that identifies how geographical skills appropriate to pupils' age will be developed systematically as they progress through the school.

132. Resources for teaching geography are satisfactory. Resources are made available to the school through the local authority loan service. Suitable use is made of visits to places of interest and pupils have had opportunities for extended field study work through residential visits.

## .. **History**

133. Three history lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work, planning and discussions with pupils show that pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2.

134. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the immediate past, recognising changes in their own families over time. They can discuss similarities and

differences in buildings in the past and the present day. In the lesson seen, pupils began to recognise the differences between household items from Victorian times and those used today. They could use the photographs provided to compare and contrast the different objects. Some Year 1 pupils were unsure about old and present day objects and had some difficulty in using the worksheets provided.

135. At Key Stage 2, younger pupils learn about invaders and settlers, main events and famous people of Roman times. They learn about Boudicca's revolt and show good understanding of different sources of evidence, including artefacts, books and articles. Pupils can suggest sources of evidence that are used to find out about the past and many use appropriate vocabulary to describe their work. They understand primary and secondary sources of evidence and have a good understanding of the passing of time. By the end of the key stage, pupils can organise and prepare a range of appropriate questions to support their independent research, such as when finding out information about aspects of Roman and Celtic Britain.

136. Pupils usually respond well to history. They are interested in the past and can compare and contrast features, such as everyday life. In two lessons seen, pupils concentrated and behaved well. A few pupils in the Key Stage 1 class took too long to settle to their work and the teacher had to continually reinforce the need for them to take turns when answering questions.

137. The quality of teaching was good in the lessons seen at Key Stage 2. In these lessons, objectives were clearly stated, pupils were well managed and teachers encouraged pupils to use their initiative to locate information. They were also encouraged to use information provided to visualise aspects of the past, such as the appearance of Boudicca, from details provided. In the satisfactory lesson seen at Key Stage 1, whilst the task was appropriate, some pupils were unsure about the contents shown on a worksheet and lacked concentration. The school has an appropriate policy and follows national guidance for planning for progression and continuity. Topics are carefully balanced to provide suitable continuity for the mixed age classes. Lesson plans appropriately show objectives and activities. Work is planned to meet the needs of pupils in the different age groups, but insufficiently shows work for pupils with differing prior attainment. The use of assessment to inform planning is not yet in place.

138. Resources are good for history. The subject is supported by the provision of many good quality books and artefacts. Pupils' work is displayed effectively and enhances the accommodation.

## .. **Music**

139. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught music by the recently appointed Key Stage 1 teacher. Due to the organisation of the timetable, no lessons were seen in music in this key stage. Music is taught to the Key Stage 2 pupils by the part time teacher. She also leads hymn practice for the whole school. Evidence from the lesson seen at Key Stage 2, the hymn practice, recorded evidence and planning shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in music throughout the school.

140. Music is often linked to topics, such as those focussed on families, the seaside and senses, at Key Stage 1. Plans show that pupils have suitable opportunities to compose and perform, such as in making different sounds, using a range of percussion instruments. Linked to their topic about the senses, pupils learn songs such as, “ Do Your Ears Hang Low?” and have appropriate opportunities to appraise the different sounds made by various instruments. Appropriate focus is placed on making pupils aware of duration and tempo when singing and playing percussion instruments. In their singing, pupils show that they can follow the rhythm of a tune and can adapt their singing to reflect the mood of the music. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils sing clearly and in tune, such as in singing “Lord of the Dance”.

141. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to sing with enthusiasm. They perform songs, such as “The Monster Wobble” and “Tyrannosaurus Rex” well and can accompany their singing by playing a range of percussion instruments. They keep a beat and show good understanding of mood. Pupils recognise musical symbols, such as a crotchet, quaver and rest and can identify sounds made by a range of musical instruments. For example, they recognised the music played on a flute as representing the fluttering of a bird, when listening to “The Aviary”. By the end of the key stage, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of music and show a mature approach to composing and performing.

142. Pupils respond well in music. They listen carefully and work hard to produce good performances. They show appreciation of others’ ideas and presentations and behaviour is good. Pupils show enjoyment of different composers’ work, such as “Carnival of the Animals”

and “Baboushka”, by Saint Saens. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show good concentration and perseverance.

143. The quality of teaching seen was good. Work was carefully planned and delivered and there were good relationships between the teacher and pupils. Expectations were high and pupils were encouraged to improve their performance. Music planning shows a clear systematic development of the subject throughout the school. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate the work of different composers, such as Grieg. Pupils have many

opportunities to rehearse, perform and take part in productions that are performed for parents and the community. Over the last few years, they have performed, for example, The Sound of Music, The Wizard of Oz, Oliver and Mary Poppins.

144. During the inspection, due to the organisation of the teaching, pupils in Key Stage 2 had a music lesson and then hymn practice, which lasted for the entire afternoon. Pupils showed good concentration, despite the long period devoted to singing.

145. Resources for music are good. The accommodation is satisfactory, though the hymn practice involved all pupils in the school using the Key Stage 2 classroom, which was only just adequate for the number of pupils present.

## .. **Physical education**

146. It was possible to see only a limited range of physical education activities during the inspection. Evidence from these, teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and observations in the playground indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress in developing appropriate skills and control by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

147. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed appropriate control, co-ordination and balance in the basic actions of travelling, jumping and turning. In the lesson seen, pupils developed appropriate control and accuracy when kicking a ball and showed suitable ability to change speed and direction. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand and play a number of games using common skills to send, receive and travel with a ball.

148. In the lesson seen at Key Stage 1, the attitudes and response of pupils were satisfactory. Both girls and boys have equal opportunities to participate in activities and they concentrated well during the lesson. They also showed good co-operation and collaborated effectively with each other.

149. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson observed. Lessons are planned appropriately and have a clear structure of a warm up time, a main activity and a concluding cool down period. Pupils wear correct dress and due regard is paid to health and safety issues relating to the subject.

150. Pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of dance and gymnastics activities. Full use is made of the outdoor area when weather permits. Visitors, such as coaches from a professional football club, provide specialist coaching from time to time. A limited number of extra-curricular activities take place. These include team games and competitive events. School teams successfully

participate in local tournaments.

151. Resources support the curriculum appropriately and storage is satisfactory. Good use is made of local facilities to compensate for the limited indoor space in the school. There are good plans to provide additional outdoor storage for equipment and to enhance the use of the school field for team games and other sporting activities.

### **Swimming**

152. No swimming lessons were seen during the inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in swimming, which has previously been undertaken each school year. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils can swim 25 metres. They learn to develop suitable arm and leg strokes. The school is currently reviewing its provision for swimming, following changes in the methods and level of funding it receives and plans to provide lessons for all Key stage 2 pupils in alternate years.



## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

153. The school was inspected over a period of two and a half days by three inspectors. A preliminary visit was made to the school. In total, six inspector days were spent making observations of 25 lessons, or parts of lessons. All classes were seen, a sample of pupils' work was examined and inspectors listened to a representative sample of pupils' reading. Discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers, governors and pupils. Nine parents contributed their views at a meeting held prior to the inspection and 19 responded to a questionnaire.

### DATA AND INDICATORS

#### 154. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	58	0	10	2

#### Teachers and classes

##### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	2.68
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.6 : 1

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	21.5

#### .. Primary schools

Average class size:

19.3
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### Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99
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	£
Total Income	110,056
Total Expenditure	112,808
Expenditure per pupil	1,912
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,836
Balance carried forward to next year	19,084

### PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

58
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Number of questionnaires returned:

19
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### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	53	47	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	58	37	0	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	32	42	21	0	5
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	32	42	21	5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	58	5	0	5
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	69	21	5	5	0
The school encourages children to get involved	42	48	10	0	0

in more than just their daily lessons  
 I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren)  
 is/are expected to do at home  
 The school's values and attitudes have a positive  
 effect on my child(ren)  
 The school achieves high standards of good  
 behaviour  
 My child(ren) like(s) school

37	53	0	10	0
58	42	0	0	0
42	53	0	5	0
74	26	0	0	0