

INSPECTION REPORT

CRAWFORD VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Crawford, Up Holland

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119224

Headteacher: Mr Laurence Kinney

Reporting inspector: Mr Peter Kerr
23583

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th February 2000

Inspection number: 189832

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Crawford Village Up Holland Lancashire
Postcode:	WN8 9QP
Telephone number:	01695 622333
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Clare Ashcroft
Date of previous inspection:	7 – 9 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Peter Kerr	Registered inspector	Mathematics	Standards
		Science, Art, Design and technology, Physical education, Religious education	The school's results and achievements Teaching Leadership and management
Trevor Smith	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils. How well the school works in partnership with parents.
John Collier	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs Provision for children under five English, History, Geography, Music, Information technology	Curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils.

The inspection contractor was:

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated at one edge of the single-street ex-mining village of Crawford. It is much smaller than other primary schools, with 51 pupils on roll, coming from the village itself and neighbouring settlements. Since the last inspection there have been major changes of personnel among the teaching staff and governing body. Pupils are admitted to the school at the beginning of the school year in which they are five, and at the time of the inspection there were nine pupils under five years of age. About three quarters of the children entering the Reception class have experienced some kind of pre-school provision and some of them have attended the independent nursery that operates in the school each morning. The children come from a variety of backgrounds, with most of their parents or carers in work and are broadly average in terms of their social and economic circumstances. They are all of white, British ethnic origin and none has English as an additional language. Their attainment on entry is very mixed, but is average overall. Currently the pupils are taught in two classes. The Reception children and Key Stage 1 pupils are in class 1 and all the Key stage 2 pupils are in class 2. There are two full-time teachers, including the headteacher, two part-time teachers and two classroom assistants. Eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Six pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is 12 per cent and below the national average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is 4 per cent and above the national average. The school's current aims include increasing the proportion of pupils achieving above average results in the national tests for 11-year olds in English, mathematics and science.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Crawford Village Primary is an improving school, with significant strengths and few weaknesses, providing a safe learning environment in which the pupils are well cared for. Pupils achieve broadly average standards by the time they are 11 years old, with examples of above average attainment at seven years old. The school makes good provision for children under five and provides a sound curriculum for pupils in both key stages, including good provision for their moral and social development. Teaching is good overall in Key Stage 1 and sometimes very good; it is broadly satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and sometimes good. The teachers do their utmost to cater for the wide age range in each class, and are ably supported by the classroom assistants, who are a valued part of the teaching team and are effective both in general classroom support and in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and with all the adults who work in the school, and they are encouraged to become mature and responsible. Attendance and behaviour are good and parents contribute well to their children's education. The headteacher is an effective team-builder and promotes the school successfully as a caring community committed to providing a good education for its pupils. The governors play an active and effective role in working with the headteacher and staff to plan for the school's development and in monitoring and evaluating the success of their initiatives. The main area for development is to provide more appropriate levels of challenge for each year group in the junior class so that the good progress established in the infants can be sustained throughout the school leading to higher standards at the end of Key Stage 2. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good or better in seven out of ten lessons overall.
- The consistently good or very good teaching in class 1 contributes to above average attainment in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and experimental skills in science at Key Stage 1.
- Relationships between all the children and adults in the school are good.
- The school takes good care of its pupils and fosters their self-confidence and personal development.
- There are effective procedures for promoting good attendance and good behaviour.
- The school works in close partnership with parents, who contribute well to their children's education.
- The class 1 teacher and classroom assistants make good provision for children under-five.
- The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good.
- Provision for the pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well together as a self-critical team.

What could be improved

- Planning and assessment are not consistently linked to skills in each subject and assessment information is not used to set appropriate targets for each age-group and for individual pupils.
- The narrow range of teaching methods used in Key Stage 2 limits opportunities for pupils in different year-groups and attainment levels to learn at an appropriate rate.
- Pupils do not develop a sufficient understanding and appreciation of different cultures and religions in Key Stage 2.
- The quality of information given to parents about their children's progress does not meet all requirements and is not consistently good throughout the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The close partnership between the headteacher, governing body and staff identified by the last inspection in 1996 has been maintained, ensuring continuity of educational direction for the school. The governors' action plan addressed all the key issues the school's action plan, and secured satisfactory improvements overall. Governors keep themselves better informed now by visiting the school to judge how effective their initiatives have been, for example to see how the new computers are being used and how the literacy and numeracy hours are taught. Standards in core subjects have been maintained and the school is on course to meet current targets in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. The standard of teaching has improved, especially in Key Stage 1, and there is an increased level of informal monitoring and evaluating of teaching within the school. The standard of provision for children under five has significantly improved and is now good. Provision for information technology has greatly improved, leading to higher standards in all aspects of the subject. There have been significant improvements in planning and assessment. Schemes of work now provide good frameworks for medium and short term planning in all subjects, and assessment procedures give a clear picture of individual pupils' attainment levels in English, mathematics and science. However, the planning is not linked sufficiently to the progressive development of skills, and the assessment information that is gathered is not yet used effectively enough to for setting appropriate individual, year group and whole school targets. The school is self-critical, committed to raising standards and has a sound capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

There is no table to compare the school's results in the national tests for 11-year olds in 1999 because fewer than ten pupils took the tests. Trends over time are also difficult to describe because only small numbers of pupils take the tests each year. Judgements therefore depend on the evidence available in the school. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. Standards are also broadly average by the time they leave and they make satisfactory progress

overall. Children under five make good progress and many of them achieve the desirable learning outcomes for children of this age before they are five. Progress is also good in Key Stage 1, and current Year 2 pupils have above average attainment in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. They also have above average skills in science investigations and dance. Their attainment in other subjects is broadly in line with expectations, but the standard of presentation of their work is not always high enough.

At Key Stage 2, standards are average in English overall, but pupils do not have the expected level of research skills, and their writing lacks originality. They have adequate numeracy skills and are confident with mental arithmetic, but are not experienced at problem solving. In science, their knowledge and understanding of forces and the human body are above average, compared with average investigative skills. Pupils throughout the school use computers and other information technology equipment competently, reflecting the recent improvements in provision, and they demonstrate appropriate skills for their age at each key stage. Standards in art, design and technology, history, geography and music are in line with expectations. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate work for their differing needs and abilities and make satisfactory progress. Those with formal statements of their needs receive effective support and make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are well motivated and enjoy learning. They listen carefully, answer questions sensibly, and contribute confidently during discussions. They settle quickly to work and sustain concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline and clearly know what is expected of them. They move around in a calm and orderly manner, are polite and courteous and show respect for the school. Incidents of bullying are rare and there have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are confident and respect each other's feelings and beliefs. They work independently, show high levels of initiative, especially in Key Stage 1, and are willing to accept responsibility. They co-operate effectively in pairs or groups, and share ideas and equipment well. The good relationships throughout the school promote a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere. The school helps the pupils to become mature and responsible.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the average and there are negligible unauthorised absences. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in English is good and sometimes very good in Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2. In mathematics it is good overall and very good in Key Stage 1. The basic skills of

literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school, except that expectations for spelling and for presentation are not consistently high enough and individual investigations and research skills are not sufficiently emphasised in Key Stage 2. The different age groups within each class are catered for very effectively in Key Stage 1, where pupils have many opportunities to learn independently through carefully prepared practical activities. In Key Stage 2, commendable efforts are made to provide suitable work for each of the four year-groups, but this difficult task is not always successfully achieved. The teachers use questions effectively to target pupils of different ages and attainments in their introductions, but the tasks that the pupils are given to do are not sufficiently different. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported with their individual learning targets to make good progress relative to their prior attainment. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and manage them well. They plan lessons carefully, keep good records of the work done, and have a good intuitive grasp of the pupils' progress. However, because their planning is not closely linked to the progressive development of skills, the assessments are not as informative as they could be, and are not used effectively for planning further challenging targets. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers are well aware of the specific needs of their pupils and make suitable arrangements for helping them. The support assistant is particularly well deployed to support pupils in the Reception year and the individual help that they regularly receive is leading to good progress. Teaching was good or better in nearly 70 per cent of the 16 lessons that were graded, and very good in nearly 20 per cent. Very little unsatisfactory teaching was seen (six per cent)

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum covers personal, social and health education as well as the National Curriculum and religious education. Schemes of work are sound and provision for children under five is good. A sound range of visits and extra-curricular activities enriches the pupils' learning experience.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are identified early. Pupils with statements of need are well-supported by the qualified classroom assistant and the school makes good use of outside specialists such as speech therapists where appropriate. Other pupils are provided with suitably adapted work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for moral and social development and sound provision for spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are led to distinguish between right and wrong on the basis of moral values and to play an increasingly responsible role in society. Western European culture is strongly represented but other cultures less effectively so. There are some good opportunities for reflection, and this is an improving area.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Day-to-day health and safety working practices are good, and child-protection procedures clear and secure. The building is clean, tidy and well maintained. Procedures for promoting and maintaining good behaviour and for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development and attendance are effective, but improvements need to be made in the use of assessment information to set challenging targets.

The school works in a close and productive partnership with parents, who make a positive contribution to their children's' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound leadership and clear educational direction. He creates a team approach to management, sharing his vision for the school with the governors and staff and involving them all appropriately in decision making.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors take an active interest in the life of the school and fulfil their statutory duties well. They help to set educational priorities for development, ensure that these are achieved within the school's budget and play an increasing role in monitoring improvements. Financial management and control are good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and governors analyse the school's performance in the national tests for seven and 11 year olds and take appropriate steps to raise standards. The teaching staff work closely together in monitoring and evaluating their own performance. Their open, self-critical approach is commendable, and contributes to the school's good capacity to improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its funds wisely to provide staffing, materials and equipment in pursuit of its stated objectives.

The school is well-staffed for the number of pupils. Class-sizes are below average. There are sufficient classroom assistants and they make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. The accommodation is satisfactory. The classrooms are of adequate size and good use is made of shared areas. The hall is small for physical education lessons in Key Stage 2, but the outdoor games areas are good. Resources to support learning are satisfactory overall, but there is a shortage of large play equipment for children under five and artefacts for history.

The school applies sound principles to achieve the best value from the money it spends.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is easy to approach. • Teaching is good. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible and prepares them well for secondary school. • The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school works closely with parents. • The support given to pupils with special educational needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The variety of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with the parents positive views of the school. It agrees with comments made at the parents' meeting that the range of extra-curricular activities is acceptable considering the size of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils enter the school at four years old with average attainment according to the school's baseline testing. Most of them achieve the desirable learning outcomes for children under five in time to begin the National Curriculum programmes of study in Year 1. The pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and sound progress in Key Stage 2, leaving the school at 11 with average attainment overall for their age. They acquire appropriate literacy and numeracy skills and use these effectively in other subjects. For example, they employ a range of different styles of writing in history and use mathematical skills to represent data in science and to draw maps in geography. The school sets targets for attainment in English and mathematics, but they are sometimes too low, as they were for English in 1999. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well relative to their prior attainment.
2. Children under five make good progress in their personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, with some of them reaching the desired learning outcomes before they are five. They make satisfactory progress in their creative and physical development. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection.
3. The previous inspection found that attainment was average in all subjects except science, where it was above average and information technology, where it was below average. Attainment in information technology has improved and is now average in all areas of the subject because new equipment has been provided and the pupils are given good opportunities to use it. Attainment in science is average, representing an apparent decline in standards. However, any comparisons of the school's national test results with other schools and from year to year are tenuous because of the small numbers of pupils in most of the year groups. Nevertheless, some important indications emerge from an analysis of the school's own results that indicate areas for improvement in provision. Over the past four years, the trend in the school's results in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 has mirrored the national trend. The inspection found no evidence of significant gender variations in standards.
4. The most recent test results are from the 1999 national tests for seven and 11 year olds. At Key Stage 2, a potentially significant feature was the absence of above average scores. Although all pupils in English and most in mathematics achieved Level 4, the level expected for average 11-year olds, none achieved Level 5 in any subject. This suggests that the school may not be catering successfully for higher attaining pupils, and the inspection confirmed that this is sometimes the case, especially towards the end of Key Stage 2. The school recognises the problem and is taking steps to address it, including extra teaching and homework for Year 6 pupils.
5. At Key Stage 1, the 1999 test results were much higher in reading than in writing and broadly average in mathematics. The low number of above average scores is a cause for concern at this level also, as no pupils achieved Level 3 in writing or mathematics. However, indications are that this year's results will be higher. In the 1999 teacher assessments in science at Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2 was very high in all areas except materials, where it was below average, but forces was the only area in which a significant number of pupils reached Level 3.

6. The inspection evidence confirms that standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science, but are above average in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics this year in Key Stage 1. Standards in writing do not match those in reading at Key Stage 1 and the school recognises that raising standards in writing is therefore a priority for development throughout the school. The inspection evidence confirms that the current Year 2 pupils have above average attainment in experimental skills and knowledge of forces in science. Relatively secure knowledge and understanding of forces is also a feature of attainment in science at Key Stage 2.
7. Pupils have average attainment in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 2. They express themselves coherently, but lack the enthusiasm and confidence noted in Key Stage 1, where pupils have many opportunities to practise their skills and reach above average standards for their age. Reading skills are average at Key Stage 2. Pupils are interested in books, particularly fiction, and express preferences for particular authors. Their reading sometimes lacks expression, however, and their research skills are not well developed. Attainment in writing is average at both key stages. Pupils develop fluent cursive styles and use appropriate grammar and punctuation for their age. However, spelling and presentation are in need of improvement in both key stages and the pupils' writing often lacks originality.
8. Attainment in mathematics is average at Key Stage 2. Pupils have sound number skills and use various strategies to add, subtract, divide and multiply mentally. They explain their thinking clearly when asked to do so in whole-class introductions. They have an adequate knowledge of shape and measure, but lack experience and confidence in this area. They understand how to represent data using simple bar charts, but do not have a wide range of data-handling and problem-solving skills. In Key Stage 1, pupils have good number skills for their age, reflecting the successful implementation of the numeracy strategy and the teacher's good use of the hundred square to deepen their understanding of place value. They are confident with numbers, weighing and measuring and shapes and have above average problem-solving skills.
9. Attainment in science is average overall. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop good investigative and experimental skills because they are given many opportunities to work independently. Their knowledge and understanding of forces is above average. For example, they understand that friction slows moving objects down. In Key Stage 2 there is a similar strength in this area of the subject, illustrated when pupils confidently discuss the different gravitational pulls exerted on different planets. In other areas their knowledge and understanding are broadly in line with expectations. The pupils' investigative skills are not as good in relation to their age as they are in Key Stage 1.
10. Pupils have appropriate information technology skills for their age at both key stages, which they use across the curriculum. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to use the keyboard and mouse to type in text and move icons around the screen, and begin to look up information electronically. By the end of Key Stage 2 they type in, edit, illustrate and save texts, use CD ROM to locate information, create pictures, programme a robot and display data at an expected level. Many of them have access to computers at home, but the school's vastly improved provision also contributes to maintaining expected standards in all these areas.
11. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards have remained in line with expectations at both key stages since the last inspection. In art, pupils use a full range of media to create pictures and models, and they learn about a range of artists. They design and make products in design and technology lessons, and evaluate their usefulness. Their paintings, drawing and models reflect appropriate skills for their age. In geography, pupils

study their local area, using a range of sources including first-hand observations and photographs. They then compare it with other areas, learning to create more sophisticated and accurate maps and plans. Older pupils consider the human aspects of geography, conducting research into what people do to make a living and designing their ideal village playground. There is also sound progress in history through the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 gain an understanding of changes over time in the context of their own experiences and by interviewing older residents of the locality, while Key Stage 2 pupils extend their appreciation of history through studies of past periods such as Tudor times. Recent improvements in provision for music have resulted in pupils enjoying the subject more and reaching standards in line with expectations in singing, composing and performing and listening critically to a range of music. The only direct evidence for standards in physical education is one dance lesson observation in Key Stage 1. The pupils' abilities to create movements using their bodies and the space around them and to collaborate very effectively to produce extended sequences are above expectations for their age and they make very good progress.

12. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at both key stages. Pupils appreciate that religious beliefs affect people's lives and discuss their own experiences in the light of religious teachings. In Key Stage 1 they relate their growing understanding to their own immediate experiences and in Key Stage 2 begin to take wider considerations into account. The curriculum allows for a growing appreciation of the variety of religious convictions that guide different cultures across the world, but the pupils do not acquire a really secure understanding of this because of some lack of focus in the teaching in Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The quality of pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and personal development, and their levels of attendance have been sustained since the last inspection and remain strong features of the school.
14. Pupils have good attitudes to work. They are well motivated, enjoy learning and keen to respond to the challenges offered. Children under five show strong interest in their work and co-operate well with their teacher and classmates. This pattern of good response continues throughout the school, and has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Pupils listen carefully to their teacher, or when others are speaking, answer questions sensibly, and contribute confidently during discussions. They settle quickly to each new task, and usually work with purpose, determination and good levels of concentration.
15. Behaviour throughout the school is good. This confirms parents' views. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline, clearly know what is expected of them without the need for formalised rules, and react accordingly. Pupils act sensibly and move around the building in a calm and orderly manner. Incidents of bullying are rare and there have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils are proud of their school and show due respect for the building and its contents.
16. Pupils' personal development is also good. They are confident, and clearly respect each other's rights feelings and beliefs. The youngest children understand the importance of sharing and taking turns, and have a well-developed sense of fair play. Pupils work well independently and show high levels of initiative through their studies, although opportunities for them to do this are much better at Key Stage 1. They willingly accept responsibility and accept it in increasing amounts, as they grow older. Older pupils, for example, act as computer or library monitors whilst the younger ones help to distribute the daily milk. The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff is also good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. There is a

relaxed and harmonious atmosphere within the school. Pupils are polite, very open in their dealings with others and always ready to be helpful. In lessons they work well together in pairs or groups, and share ideas and equipment well. At playtime, and in the dining hall, they are friendly and sociable.

17. Attendance remains above the average for primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is negligible. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall standard of teaching has improved since the last inspection following the appointment of a new teacher and observations of good practice in other schools. It is good or better in about seven out of ten lessons and very good in about one lesson in five. This is about the same as the national picture. However, a much greater proportion of the good or better teaching is in Key Stage 1 and the under-fives than in Key Stage 2, which is the reverse of the previous inspection's findings. Teaching is judged sound overall rather than good because of the relatively uneven distribution of good teaching between the key stages. There is only a very small amount – 6 per cent - of unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers have successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. They teach the basic facts, such as letter-sounds and number facts clearly and enable the pupils to apply their skills in different subjects. Their knowledge of the different subjects of the National Curriculum is sufficient to provide at least sound teaching in all subjects, with the help of specialists in science and music. The quality of teaching is therefore even across the curriculum, enabling the pupils to acquire a good spread of knowledge, understanding and skills.
19. The teachers have good relationships with the pupils throughout the school and know them well. They create a relaxed but secure learning environment, setting high expectations for good behaviour. All lessons are planned thoroughly, with resources to hand, and classroom assistants know exactly what they are expected to do. In the introductions to lessons, teachers teach the basic skills well, particularly literacy and numeracy, and target questions at individual pupils to keep them interested and check their understanding. They make sure that the pupils know what is to be learned in each lesson, set different tasks for the various age groups in the class and keep clear records to show what each pupil has done. However, because the planning and assessment are not consistently linked to the progressive development of skills, sufficiently challenging targets are not consistently set for each individual and year group.
20. In Key Stage 1, the teacher has a good understanding of how pupils of this age learn best. The introductions, which are enlivened by the teacher's own evident enthusiasm, include opportunities for pupils to put forward their ideas. The work that is set for each age group closely matches their interests and needs, and a good balance is achieved between direct teaching by the teacher and the pupils learning through practical activities. The teacher ensures that the needs of the children under five are met at all times. They have ample opportunity to choose activities and to engage in purposeful play under the expert supervision of either the teacher, or one of the two classroom assistants. The teacher is particularly effective in allowing pupils to work together in groups, experimenting and learning from their own mistakes. He keeps a close eye on proceedings and intervenes when necessary to keep them on the right track. For example, in a mathematics lesson they are allowed time to play around with weighing scales in order to discover the importance of balancing the two sides before having to weigh particular objects accurately.
21. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and good for children under-five and for the pupils in Key Stage 1. Teachers are well aware of

the specific needs of their pupils and make suitable arrangements for helping them. The support assistant is particularly well deployed to support pupils in the Reception year and the individual help that they regularly receive is leading to good progress.

22. In Key Stage 2, the introductions focus on appropriate learning targets that build on previous learning, reflecting sound knowledge of each subject. The questions are sometimes open-ended to aid the pupils' thinking, as in an English lesson that was observed, or quick-fire to keep them on their toes, as in a geography lesson that catered well for the different age groups. Introductions to mathematics lessons contain competitive elements that are also successful in keeping the pupils motivated to get the correct answer. However, the introductions sometimes last too long, lacking the pace, energy and imagination to keep the whole class engaged.
23. The work that is set for the pupils is usually different for the lower and upper juniors, and is carefully prepared. When the work is based on first-hand experience and well-matched to the pupils' ages and interests, they respond enthusiastically and make good progress, as they did in a geography lesson based on a study of the school's locality. However, in other lessons, there is an over-reliance on worksheets that require limited answers and the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to engage in carefully chosen practical activities through which they can learn at their own pace. The work set for the older and higher attaining pupils is sometimes too easy and mechanical, and opportunities are clearly missed to allow the pupils to extend their learning through practical and problem-solving activities. For example in lessons on shapes and angular measure all the Year 5 and 6 pupils have to complete similar worksheets and there is no challenge for them to apply their knowledge and skills to designing shapes or solving geometrical problems. Similar limitations in the teaching methods deployed restrict the pupils' learning in science, particularly in being able to use measuring equipment to its potential and carrying out individual investigations, and in English, where the pupils do not acquire sufficient research skills.
24. Pupils make good progress when the teachers plan for them to share their skills, for example using computers and a programmable robot. They respond positively, improving their social skills as well as their expertise. The teachers make good use of the new technology that has been installed, deploying classroom assistants sensibly to supervise pupils working outside the classroom. They generally plan the activities carefully and brief the assistants well so that everyone knows what the object of the exercise is and can monitor progress towards it. On some occasions when the assistants are supervising pupils working individually from text-books, the pupils lose interest and motivations and progress slows down.
25. There are examples of teachers making very good use of homework, especially in Key Stage 1, where pupils bring in objects for the "t" table and enlist the aid of their parents to find out the weights of various household items. The home-school reading diaries are very useful in both key stages to keep a dialogue going and allowing the pupils to keep track of their progress.
26. The teachers keep thorough records of what ground the pupils have covered and the levels they have reached in the core subjects. They make some use of this information in their planning, for example to revisit areas that have not been understood in science. However, because assessments are not clearly linked to skills' development, especially in mathematics and science, they are not used effectively to identify sufficiently challenging new learning targets for each age group and individual pupils. The quality of the teachers' day-to day assessments of the pupils' understanding is often good, especially in Key Stage 1 and in some of the lesson introductions in Key Stage 2, and they use them well to inform their questioning.

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

27. The school provides a satisfactory range of worthwhile opportunities within the curriculum which are relevant to pupils' interests and aptitudes. The curriculum is well balanced and meets the statutory requirements to teach all of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Teachers are aware of the need to ensure that work each year is not repeated in the mixed-age classes. There is, for example, a useful curriculum 'map' indicating a four-year programme of work in history and geography in Key Stage 2 to ensure this. Literacy plans also show different approaches this year to those employed last year to teach the required skills and knowledge. Schemes of work are in place for the subjects and they provide a good framework for teachers to produce detailed half-termly and weekly plans, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Some schemes, music and science for example, are being reviewed and this is appropriate because of the recent appointment of specialist teachers who have taken responsibility for these subjects. The structure now in place represents an improvement since the last inspection when the schemes of work were criticised. Provision for children who are under five has also improved. There is now a detailed policy that sets out a programme of work for them based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, particularly for those with formal statements of their need, enabling them to make good progress. Support is properly provided in line with their statements and there is good liaison with speech therapists, one of whom makes regular visits to the school. For other pupils, appropriate individual education plans are written, setting out targets that will enable them to make progress, for example, in spelling. These are regularly reviewed.
29. The school has satisfactory strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The national strategies are now well established and standards have improved over the last three years at the end of Key Stage 2 in English. The Numeracy Strategy has not yet been in place long enough to have affected standards in mathematics. Results in 1999 were not as good as in the previous two years. Other subjects of the curriculum properly support the development of literacy skills. In history, for example, Key Stage 2 pupils produce well-written accounts of events in Tudor times. Similarly, numeracy skills are reinforced in geography when pupils measure the distance 'as the crow flies' between places on a map of South West Lancashire.
30. For a small school, there are satisfactory opportunities for extra-curricular activities, although some parents would like to see more. A games club meets each week and there are two recorder groups, for beginners and for more advanced players. School teams participate in local events, such as a swimming gala and football and unihoc matches. The curriculum is enriched by educational visits, for instance to Jodrell Bank and to a local supermarket for younger pupils to study food. These visits bring subjects to life and Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about their recent visit to Gawthorpe Hall for work connected with the Civil War.
31. The school is committed to providing full and equal access to the whole curriculum for all its pupils. There is sound provision for their personal, social and health education. A programme of work is currently being developed and issues such as bullying and violence are discussed in the Key Stage 2 class. Appropriate consideration is given to the teaching of sex education with the help of the school nurse and the harmful effect of some drugs is discussed. Younger pupils have opportunities in their 'circle times' to discuss matters of concern to them and are unselfconscious in expressing their feelings about what makes them happy. The way in which these topics are approached gives pupils the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions in later life.

32. The school makes best use of limited opportunities to engage with the wider community. The local Methodist minister makes regular visits to the school and pupils perform in the annual Up Holland Prom. They also mount Christmas performances for their parents most recently based on the story of 'Dick Whittington' and 'Teddy's Christmas'. There are satisfactory links with the two secondary schools to which most pupils transfer. Staff from those schools visit Crawford and pupils spend time at the schools before transferring. There are links with other primary schools too and a joint swimming team is formed with one other school. An educational visit has recently taken place with another school in connection with a Tudors and Stuarts topic.
33. The school's provision for spiritual and cultural development is sound. Its provision for moral and social development is good. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection but there is a greater awareness now of the need to provide information and experiences that will help pupils to appreciate the nature of our multicultural society. The school complies with the legal requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship and assemblies contain a time when pupils listen to or join in with a prayer and reflect on what they have heard. Assemblies are used to broaden pupils' understanding of the world and to decide upon the right way to conduct their lives. Is it right, for example, to play tricks on people as the boy did who summoned help by crying 'Wolf' where there was no wolf there attacking the sheep? Why do Chinese people celebrate their New Year at a different time from us? By posing such questions and asking pupils to think about them, spiritual development is being properly fostered. Occasionally in lessons, curiosity and interest are sparked and pupils are stimulated to consider their own values and beliefs. A particularly sensitive reading of a modern poem about how the world is being polluted creates a considered reaction from older pupils. Younger ones are fascinated by photographs brought in by a visiting speaker showing her when she was younger. The pupils are prompted to ask questions and reflect on how different her childhood was compared with theirs.
34. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' moral development. There is an accepted code of behaviour and pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Positive contributions to school-life, such as effort in class and helpful behaviour, are rewarded. The points or tokens gained accumulate through the week and a cup is awarded to the team that has the most points. Pupils are made aware of the needs of others by raising funds for national charities and by personal contact, through letters, with an orphanage in Egypt. This is a recent, but worthwhile initiative and toys collected at Christmas for these children were taken personally to the orphanage by friends of the school.
35. The school has created a well-ordered framework within which social development blossoms. Provision is good. All staff provide good role models for pupils to follow and relationships are good. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively in group activities and Reception children play happily together in the cafe taking on the role of customer, waiter or chef. Key Stage 1 pupils learn to take turns in expressing their views during 'circle times' and give each other a hug at the end of a productive session. The school makes best use of limited opportunities for pupils to engage in other social activities. Sports events are attended with other schools and there is an annual visit to Skelmersdale College for a 'pantomime'. Educational visits also offer useful opportunities for social interaction outside the school setting.
36. The school strongly promotes western European culture particularly through music, art and history. Pupils recognise music from 'The Planet Suite' and have produced paintings in the style of Joan Miro. Through the study of historical topics they become aware of how modern society has been shaped by the actions of our predecessors. Pupils are introduced to other non-European cultures through stories, such as 'Handa's Surprise' from Africa and through studies of traditional celebrations in other cultures, such as Chinese New Year. In

religious education, the beliefs and values of other faiths are introduced to pupils. However, lessons do not always enable them to fully understand or appreciate the similarities and differences between different faiths and traditions or relate them to our modern multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Pupils' general welfare remains a high priority and continues to be well promoted within the school. Child protection arrangements reflect local authority guidelines, with the headteacher having designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies if cases of abuse are suspected. A suitable health and safety policy is in place and day-to-day working practices are good. Standards of cleaning are high, the building is tidy and generally in good repair. Pupils are supervised carefully throughout the day and lunchtime routines are managed smoothly and efficiently. As a result the school functions as a calm and orderly community. There are appropriate arrangements for dealing with accidents, illness and the administration of medicines, and emergency equipment is serviced regularly with a fire drill being held at least once every term.
38. Procedures for promoting and maintaining high standards of behaviour remain effective. There are no formal school rules, but an informally based general code of conduct, discussed and agreed with pupils, works very well and ensures their thoughtful and orderly conduct around school at all times. Sanctions are appropriate and applied fairly. Procedures to deal with bullying are not adequately formalised. However, any reported incidents are taken seriously and dealt with effectively.
39. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are mainly informal, but also effective, and permeate all areas of school life. Teachers know the pupils very well, have good relationships with them and respond positively to their needs. The programme for personal, health and social education is developing and taught explicitly through the curriculum. Praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage good work and behaviour, and significant achievements are celebrated each week during the Friday afternoon assembly.
40. Procedures for assessing pupil's attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection, when they were criticised, and are now satisfactory. In addition to the statutory national tests for seven and 11 year olds, the school undertakes a range of assessments on the pupils as they move through the school. Soon after they arrive, a baseline test is carried out, which is beginning to give the school a secure benchmark against which to measure each pupil's progress. Additional tests are also carried out in Years 3, 4 and five in English, mathematics and science and samples of marked work are kept to indicate each pupil's National Curriculum level in these core subjects. This gives a clear profile of overall attainment, but it is not sufficiently analysed in terms to give pointers for further learning targets in specific areas of each subject for individuals or year-groups. Assessment in other subjects is informal but is adequate as a broad guide to planning.
41. Attendance is monitored thoroughly. Registers are completed efficiently at the start of sessions in accordance with current guidelines, and any absences that are not explained promptly by parents are followed up quickly and effectively. Rates of attendance are reported appropriately to parents. Pupils are actively encouraged to attend school regularly, and those achieving full attendance over the year receive a trophy at the annual prize-giving ceremony. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire indicate that their children like coming to school, and inspection evidence supports this

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained effective links with its parents. They feel welcome in school, and almost all of them who responded to the questionnaire consider that it works closely with them. They are actively encouraged to support their children's learning through the work they do at home, and are very satisfied with the amount of homework provided. Reading diaries are used effectively. The parents' active participation in their children's reading helps to maintain their interest and improve their performance. The majority of parents have signed up to the home school agreement. Several parents regularly give up their time to help in class, where they provide valuable, and well-organised help with activities such as reading. Others accompany school trips. Their presence contributes very positively to the working atmosphere in the school and helps to promote positive attitudes to work among the pupils. The Parent Teacher Association remains active and provides generous support for the school through organised fund-raising and social events.
43. Communications with parents are satisfactory. Parents are happy with the information provided about their children's progress and feel comfortable approaching the school at other times if they have any worries or concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved with the school to provide and review the support that is given and assess its success. Pupils' annual reports, however, do not meet current requirements. They do not report on design and technology, and rarely set targets for improvement. They also lack detail at Key Stage 2. Parents are well informed about life generally in school and receive some details about what is taught, particularly in respect of topic work. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented and contain all necessary items of information. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are notified of any concerns at an early stage and fully involved in the review process.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The school is well managed. All the strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained and the key issues and other weaknesses addressed. Improved planning and assessment procedures have been introduced and the appointment of an experienced infant teacher has helped to raise the standard of teaching for this age group. There have also been improvements in the level of monitoring and evaluation by the governors and the staff. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities, and the school makes good use of its resources. Policies sometimes lag behind practice, but this does not seriously impede the work of the school.
45. The headteacher provides sound educational leadership and effectively encourages a collaborative and self-evaluative approach to the work of the school. He successfully shares his vision of the school as a learning community with parents, staff and pupils and leads by example in being open to suggestions for improvement. By sharing this open, self-critical approach fully with the governing body, he ensures that the school maintains a good capacity for further improvement.
46. The work of the school successfully reflects its aims and values, especially in the importance of good relationships, respect for all individuals and equality of opportunity. The list of aims is rather long, however, and some are not carefully worded, so that, for example, sympathy and tolerance of different cultures are aimed for instead of understanding and appreciation. This choice of wording reflects a lack of purpose in the school's provision for multicultural education and teaching positively about different religious beliefs. In other areas, for example, appraisal, monitoring and evaluating of teaching and responding to bullying, policies lag behind the school's good practice.

47. The headteacher effectively delegates responsibilities. He works as an equal partner with the other full-time teacher in organising the curriculum and trying to get the best out of the available resources. The classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning because they are given a suitable amount of responsibility and are clearly seen as part of the teaching team.
48. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory duties well. It provides the basis for good care of the pupils through good security measures and day-to day health and safety practices. The governors take an active interest in the curriculum. Individual governors linked to specific subjects attend appropriate courses, for example about the literacy and numeracy strategies. They visit the school and observe lessons, so that they can come to an informed view about the school's performance and so help the headteacher and staff to consider ways of moving forward.
49. The small size of the school presents inevitable difficulties for the teachers. They have to teach wide age-bands, and do not see many different teaching styles and methods in operation. In the circumstances, mutual monitoring, evaluation and support are vital, and the teachers do this well. They regularly observe each other's lessons and share their ideas and criticisms openly in a genuine quest to improve their teaching. The effectiveness of this good practice is limited, however, by the lack of outside perspectives and support.
50. Following the previous inspection, the appointment of a new teacher with skills and experience in Reception and Key Stage 1, along with observations of similar schools at work, has raised the standard of teaching in this stage. A similar focus is lacking at Key Stage 2 to ensure that the pupils maintain the good momentum in their learning that they establish in the infants. The school has sound appraisal practice in place, but the arrangements lack formality, and are not fully shared with all the staff and governors. Arrangements for the induction of new teachers are satisfactory.
51. The school has a good one-year development plan to organise educational priorities and decide how best to meet them. Initiatives are realistic, relevant and carefully costed so that the school can implement them out of its budget. The headteacher works closely with the governors in evaluating the school's performance and in adjusting priorities in response to emerging needs. For example, following reflection on the school's latest national test results, there is to be an increased focus on the Year 6 pupils in order to increase the number of pupils achieving Level 5. Individual governors visit the school to see for themselves the effects of improvements such as the provision of more computers and a new working area for the infants, and report back to the full governing body. This is a good improvement since the last inspection in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum.
52. The fact that the school's development plan runs for one year only limits its usefulness as a longer-term planning tool in which current priorities can be managed alongside less pressing but nonetheless important areas for development. The school's financial planning is of good quality in the difficult circumstances of a small income that is unpredictable from year to year. The governors manage the budget well, successfully seeking good value for money in the purchase of goods and services. The current budget surplus is above average this year, but is generally below average reflecting a sound policy of spending as much as possible of the school's income on staffing and resources within prudent financial planning restraints. The secretary manages the day-to day finances well. She is able to furnish the headteacher with any details required, leaving him free to concentrate on teaching and management.

53. The school makes good use of the material resources available to it, including new up-to-date computers that pupils use across the curriculum. The funds that are allocated to the school for pupils with statements of special educational needs are effectively used to provide good quality support, to the benefit of the whole school.
54. There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers and support assistants to meet the demands of the curriculum including the areas of learning for children under five. The support assistants make an efficient and valuable contribution to the pupils' learning through their skilled guidance of groups and individual pupils. There is sufficient space in the building to accommodate all the pupils, but the hall is very small for physical education lessons, especially for Key Stage 2 pupils. The generous outdoor sports areas compensate for this in the summer. The infant classroom was cramped during the inspection, with limited play space for the younger children, but the teacher has acted swiftly to address this problem by making better use of the shared area outside the classroom.
55. The resources available to support teaching are sound overall. There are plenty of good quality resources to support the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and a good supply of modern computers for pupils to apply information technology skills across the curriculum. The range of computer software is satisfactory. Resources in all other subjects are at least adequate, no artefacts to support learning in history. The resources for children under five are good except that there is a shortage of large play equipment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The previous report identified areas for improvement in planning, assessment and teaching, which the school addressed, making good improvements in each area. To build on these improvements and make the school more effective overall, the headteacher and governors should:
- (1) Further improve the effectiveness of planning and assessment procedures by:
- Linking assessments closely to the systematic development of skills, especially in Attainment Target 1 in mathematics and science. (19, 40, 67, 72, 79, 84)
 - Ensuring that assessments clearly indicate strengths and weaknesses in attainment for individual pupils and for each year group. (67, 72, 79, 84)
 - Ensuring that the questions asked or the tasks set as the basis for assessments fully challenge all the pupils, including higher attainers, in order to indicate the limit at which they are working. (4, 26, 67, 73, 78, 80)
 - Analysing assessment information thoroughly in order to set suitably challenging new learning targets for individual pupils and for each year group. (84, 86)
- (2) Further improve the standard of teaching in Key Stage 2 by:
- Finding more ways of enabling pupils to learn through purposeful activities, reducing the dependence on duplicated worksheets. (23, 68, 78, 83)
 - Using strategies that encourage independent learning and research skills. (7,8,9,16, 23, 67, 72, 74, 76, 85, 99)
 - Striking a better balance between talking to the pupils and them engaging in learning activities. (22, 71, 85, 86, 112)

- (3) Improve the standard of writing and general presentation of work, especially in Key Stage 1, and the content of the pupils' writing in Key Stage 2 (6, 7, 70, 83, 85)
- (4) Extend and deepen the pupils' understanding and appreciation of different cultures and faiths by:
- Improving the teaching of religious education so that pupils reflect more purposefully on the meaning of religious belief and learn to understand and appreciate the values of different religions (12, 36, 46, 114)
 - Introducing a wider cultural base to the art, literature and music used as models for the pupils and displayed around the school.(36, 89)
 - Seeking ways of giving the pupils relevant, positive experiences of the different cultures that contribute to our multicultural society. (114)
 - Encouraging pupils to discover more about different cultures through their own reading and research.
- (5) Improve the quality of reports to parents so that they:
- Meet the statutory requirement to report on each subject of the National Curriculum. (43)
 - Are consistent throughout the school in the quality and range of information they provide about the pupils' progress. (43)
 - Include new learning targets for each pupil as well as examples of the skills, knowledge and understanding they have recently acquired. (43)

In addition to these key issues, the governors should consider including the following additional points in their action plan:

- Providing suitable large equipment for under-fives to develop and practise their gross motor skills. (55, 58, 65)
- Extending the school development plan to cover more than one year. (52)
- Ensuring that policies reflect current practice. (37, 38, 43, 46, 50,)
- Re-organising the deployment of the specialist science teacher so that the pupils do not spend too much time at once on science in Key Stage 2. (86)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

The school's results in the national tests for eleven-year olds are not published here because too few pupils took them for meaningful comparisons with other schools to be made.

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	19	50	25	6		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	51
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	51
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	56

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
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	£
Total income	96,956
Total expenditure	98,363
Expenditure per pupil	1,892
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,707
Balance carried forward to next year	11,300

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

51

Number of questionnaires returned

32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	37	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	44	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	50	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	88	12	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	78	22	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	91	9	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	16	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	34	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	84	13	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	31	28	0	16

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents have an overwhelmingly supportive view of the school. The views expressed at the parents' meeting reflect the responses to the questionnaire.

Other issues raised by parents

Parents whose children have special educational needs are particularly appreciative of the way the school supports them.

Parents whose children have moved to the school from other schools agree that they settle quickly and make good progress.

Parents feel that the school prepares their children well for secondary school. The parents at the meeting expressed the view that the amount of extra-curricular activities is acceptable for the size of the school.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF

THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. Education for children under five is provided in a class with older pupils from Years 1 and 2. At the time of the inspection nine of the 11 Reception children were still under the age of five. The children enter the school at the beginning of the year in which they will be five. Most have some form of pre-school experience. Some of them have attended the independent nursery that operates in the school each morning. The local authority's baseline assessment is undertaken within the first few weeks of entry into the Reception classes. Information from this indicates that attainment on entry to the school is average overall. This is supported by inspection findings.
58. The provision for the needs of children under five is good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum provides a broad and balanced programme of learning experiences that are outlined in a newly written policy. Lessons are thoroughly planned in line with the defined areas of learning for these children. The teacher and support staff work very effectively as a team to promote sound educational standards. One assistant gives particularly good support to two children who have statements of educational need. She is well qualified to help such children and liaises effectively with a visiting speech therapist to provide worthwhile experiences for them, usually on a one-to-one basis. She keeps detailed records of the progress that they make. All the children are taught well. The teacher has a warm and friendly manner but children know that they are expected to behave sensibly at all times. They are provided with a good variety of activities and are busily engaged throughout the school day. The teacher has a very good understanding of what interests young children and how they learn through practical experiences and experiments. He gives them every chance to try things for themselves and then intervenes to help them. In drawing the letter 't' on a chalk-board, for example, a child produces his own example and is then shown how to improve it by making the initial down-stroke straighter. Each child is well-known to the teacher but he keeps sound written records of progress in the different areas of learning. Support staff also write significant observations on these record-sheets. There are sufficient resources to support the work. However, children are unable to make use of a secure playground to enjoy wheeled toys because of a lack of facility for this play and the absence of a safe surface for climbing apparatus. This inhibits the development of their gross motor skills. The classroom too is somewhat cramped with a restricted area for home-play. There are plans however to move this equipment into the adjoining resource area to solve the problem.

Personal and social development

59. Most children enter the school with reasonably well developed personal skills. They make good progress and achieve the expected outcomes before they are five. They develop self-confidence as they learn to follow the routines of the class and of the school and are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, particularly during the times when they are allowed to choose their own activities. They also take responsibility for themselves in formal situations, in creative activities for example, when they put on their aprons and return them to the pegs at the end of their work. They collaborate well in role-play activities and, in their imaginary train, one girl sensibly takes the orders for food from the passengers while another acts as the driver. They are encouraged to take turns and to share toys and equipment at all times. One child, for example, holds the bowl carefully while another fills it with water and then they change places. In their 'circle time' activities, they begin by shaking hands with the child next to them and respect the fact that only one can speak at a time. They learn to dress and undress for physical education and to leave their clothes tidily. Teaching is good, with a consistent approach that enables children to

understand the behaviour that is expected in school. Most are well on the way to attaining the outcomes that focus on their personal and social development.

Language and literacy

60. Most children enter the school with average language skills for their age. Two children have specific speech problems but they are being well supported to rectify these and are making good progress. All children listen well and concentrate as the teacher uses the illustrations in the Big Book to enable them to talk about the story of '*The Train Ride*'. Children's language skills are being well developed through such discussions and through role play activities when they act out the train ride in their classroom. They know the routines for an orderly discussion and put their hands up to answer questions. They express their feelings clearly when saying what has made them happy during the day. Many recognise the sounds of letters. They have a sound of the week and a table on which they can display objects that begin with that letter. They appreciate that writing is important and many are forming letters correctly. Some write simple sentences with correct spelling of basic words such as *and*, *he* and *is*. Lower attaining children are able to use magnetic letters to compile their own name and they know that they need a capital letter at the beginning. All children are developing an interest in books. Many know the plot of *Handa's Surprise* and help the teacher to re-tell it in their literacy lesson, acting out the story when they are chosen to be one of the animals that steals the various items of fruit. They each have a reading book that is appropriate to their level of attainment. They talk about the story sensibly and read accurately. A higher attaining pupils is already able to decode the word *took* because she knows the sounds of the first and last letter.
61. Pupils are making good progress and are on course to reach the expected learning outcomes for before they are five. Teaching is good and the arrangement whereby the teacher is able to concentrate on the Reception children while the learning support assistant teaches Years 1 and 2 is particularly effective. Good records are kept of progress in reading, usually by writing in the home/school reading book and noting when a child has been successful and what difficulties have been encountered. These books provide a useful dialogue with parents, most of whom support their children well by hearing them read at home.

Mathematics

62. Most children are progressing well towards attaining the desirable learning outcomes in mathematics by the time they are five. They are confident in counting to 20 and many can count back from ten without help. The higher attainers confidently put the numbers to 20 in the correct order. Some children count beyond twenty and they all know that we are in the year '2000' and recognise this number. When building structures, they know that they are using cubes and cylinders and most recognise and name circles and triangles. When playing in the cafe, they correctly identify coins up to 20p. Some children are beginning to use addition in practical situations. In their numeracy lesson, they can say what number they would reach if, having taken three steps forward, they take another two. In practical situations too they count accurately and say how many jugs of water are needed to fill a bowl. Teaching is good and concentrates on giving children appropriate practical experience of using mathematics. The support assistant is used well to give specific help to the Reception children and the teacher is adept at noticing situations when mathematical understanding can be checked. At registration he will ask how many children are in the class if two are away and during free play activities he checks to see if children know the names of the shapes that are being used for building.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Because children take part in lessons with their Year 1 and 2 classmates, they are making good progress. They are on track to achieve the desirable learning outcomes specified for children under five and some have already done so. The average attaining children are aware that life was different in the past through listening to a visiting speaker telling of her experiences in school many years ago. Through a study of transport, they know about fire engines and buses and have been inspired by having a tractor drive into the school playground. They recall the visit enthusiastically. They talk about where they live and know that coal was once used to drive steam engines. They recognise animals such as giraffes and elephants in the African story that they are studying in literacy and understand how the Chinese celebrate their New Year. Using a computer program, children can create pictures. They have good control of the mouse and know how to choose a colour and an operation such as 'spraying' to make a design. Teachers provide a good variety of activities to enable children to make progress and prepare appropriate resources to support the work. Because of an enthusiastic approach, children are keen to learn.

Creative development

64. Children make satisfactory progress and attain levels in most areas of creative work that are typical for their age. They make biscuits and link the work with science to discover how materials change when they are heated. They create patterns by folding brightly coloured paper, cutting out shapes and straightening out the paper. They then stick the pattern on to black paper to produce a piece of work of good quality. They enter into role-play activities enthusiastically, becoming a waiter in the cafe or a passenger on the train. They draw pictures of a tractor using pencils and crayons and make objects that begin with 't', such as a teapot, from plasticine. With construction kits, they build a stable garage or a house. In assemblies, they join with others to sing the various songs in a lively fashion and in a dance lesson they interpret the music imaginatively. In a music lesson, they choose appropriate instruments that will produce sound effects for a space picture. Little direct teaching was observed to develop this aspect of work except for the support assistant who gave good encouragement to those children cutting out patterns. She was careful not to do too much for them but properly supported those who were having difficulty with scissors, holding the paper for one so that he could cut more successfully.

Physical development

65. The children's physical development is generally at the level expected for their age and they are on course to achieve the expected outcomes before they are five. The school does not have a secure outdoor area or the large equipment needed to fully develop their gross motor skills but opportunities are provided for them to play with large balls and other equipment on the playground. In their dance lessons, despite the small hall, they use space well and have reasonable co-ordination in making their animal shapes and the associated movements. Teaching is very good. There is appropriate attention given to safety in the restricted space and to the effects of exercise on the body. Demonstrations by children are very effectively used to inspire others to try different approaches and the lesson is taken at a commendably brisk pace. In the classroom, children make satisfactory progress in the skills of cutting, gluing, drawing and colouring. They use modelling tools to create objects from plasticine and manipulate the mouse on the computer without difficulty.

ENGLISH

66. Because of the small numbers of pupils taking national tests each year at seven and 11, it is not possible to make reliable comparisons between years or between the school's results and those of similar schools. The inspection found that standards at Key Stage 1 are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection, largely because of improved teaching. Standards at Key Stage 2 have remained broadly similar to last time. The results of the most recent national tests showed that all pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attained the expected levels in English but that none achieved the higher level (Level 5). The 1999 test results at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that standards in reading were well above the national average and in writing they were above the national average. But, whereas three pupils out of seven gained the higher level (Level 3) in reading, none achieved this level in writing. The work seen during the inspection suggests that the current Year 6 pupils are achieving average standards and that the small number of seven-year-olds are working at above average levels in English overall. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls' achievements over time.
67. The literacy hour is now well established and is used effectively to teach basic skills. Work in other subjects also contributes to the development of literacy skills. In history, for example, Year 6 pupils write a detailed report about the Great Fire of London. However, they do not often carry out their own research and very few can explain how to locate a book using the classification system in the school library. The school is aware that too few pupils are achieving the higher levels of attainment in writing at Key Stage 1 and in English overall at Key Stage 2 and is striving to address this issue. There are plans to offer blocks of time to produce extended pieces of written work and to give the oldest pupils extra, concentrated help to boost their attainment. The assessment procedures are not yet being effectively used to target this help. Written pieces of work are gathered regularly but are not analysed to determine the specific difficulties that individual pupils or groups of pupils are experiencing and set targets that would improve their performance. The school does set overall targets for achievement in tests at the end of Key Stage 2 but these turned out to be inaccurate in 1999 and the target for 2000 may also prove to be too low.
68. Standards in speaking and listening at the end of Key Stage 1 are better than those expected nationally. Pupils speak clearly and in sentences. They listen closely to their teacher and observe the rules for an orderly discussion. They are given many useful opportunities to practise their skills and make good progress. For example, one pupil has brought in a paper dragon having attended the celebration of Chinese New Year in Liverpool. This is skilfully used to initiate an interesting discussion. Similarly, 'circle times' are used to give everyone a chance to say something. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are less willing to contribute to class discussions and often have to be prompted to speak. However, they have the skills expected for their age and can express their feelings clearly when required. A group of Year 6 pupils, for example, forcefully talk about their favourite subjects and what could be improved to make the school even better. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make sound progress in developing their skills. In their lessons, the teacher ensures that all pupils contribute to discussions and targets individuals to answer questions. He does not just ask for answers from those who have their hands up. This is good practice.
69. Standards of reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. All pupils like reading and most recognise a good number of words by sight over and above the basic vocabulary. They read accurately though not always fluently because of the challenging texts that they are tackling. They do however understand the stories and can talk sensibly about books, often giving examples of their favourites. All know the sounds of individual letters and some can use these to decode unknown words. Pupils overall make good progress. The texts chosen for use in the literacy hour are imaginatively used to create an interest in books and to check that pupils can identify the title, author and illustrator. Every opportunity is

taken to rehearse pupils' phonic knowledge. When writing the date on the board, for example, the weekday is spelt out using the letter sounds. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of reading are average. Pupils have retained their interest in books and most can quote a favourite author. Jacqueline Wilson and Roald Dahl are frequently mentioned. Pupils read accurately and fluently but not always with expression. They have sufficient strategies for coping with unknown words, using phonics to build them or self-correcting their mistakes because the sentence does not make sense. They explain the purpose of an index and contents page in an information book but say that they rarely choose to read these for pleasure, preferring fiction books. Progress is satisfactory across the key stage. This is due in part to the sustained support that most pupils receive at home. Reading record books are well maintained with helpful comments from parents, teachers and other adults who hear reading regularly. Pupils have a reasonable number and variety of books in school including some classic children's fiction. A Year 5 pupil quotes 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' as a favourite book. The current Year 4 pupils have above average attainment compared to other year groups. Many are already independent readers who read with expression and good understanding. This illustrates the differences that can occur between year-groups, making comparisons between them unreliable as evidence of the school's overall performance.

70. Attainment in writing at the end of both key stages is average by national standards. Some work in Key Stage 1 is spoilt by untidy presentation, though letters are usually formed correctly and handwriting is regularly practised. Pupils are already learning how to join letters. Most pupils understand the conventions of writing a story and use full stops and capital letters correctly to write sentences. Spelling is reasonable though work from the lower attaining pupil sometimes needs interpretation. Vocabulary is appropriate but unadventurous and sentences are simple. Work by Year 6 pupils displays a greater use of complex sentences but still a reluctance to try exciting vocabulary or unconventional beginnings and endings of stories. *Once upon a time* is still often used to start a story. Punctuation marks such as inverted commas are used correctly and work is occasionally divided into paragraphs. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to write in sentences and to spell difficult words like *spgettea* (spaghetti) that are phonetically plausible. In Key Stage 2, handwriting develops well and pupils in Year 4 have a consistent style of joined writing, producing neat work using ink. Spelling however is not always as accurate as it should be with a higher attaining Year 5 pupil, for example, consistently starting words like *went*, *with* and *were* with 'wh'. Word-processing programs are used effectively to revise work and produce a neat copy.
71. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work throughout the school and show interest in their lessons. Teaching is good and sometimes very good in Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2. Teachers are aware of the different age-groups in their class and plan work thoroughly to meet their pupils' needs. This enables all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. Before a lesson starts in Key Stage 2, pupils are given an indication of what they are expected to learn and this helps them to focus on what they have to do. However, there is sometimes too much talking by the teacher, making it difficult to maintain enthusiasm, especially amongst the older pupils. In the good lessons in Key Stage 1, a brisk pace is maintained and the teacher has a warm relationship with pupils who respond with enthusiasm. They enjoy, for example, acting out the story from their class text - *Handa's Surprise* - and this reinforces their understanding of the plot and enables them to sequence it accurately. The teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn and has high expectations for good behaviour and application to work. He consistently teaches the basic skills well. In a handwriting lesson, for example, pupils spell out words beginning with 'sc' and then write the sentence with joined letters. The teacher keeps a careful watch to make sure letters and joins are being correctly formed. Support staff are used effectively in both classes to support the different work that is necessary for the various age-groups. Older Key Stage 2 pupils are thus helped to compose

their rap poems and many are keen to read them for the rest of the class. Pupils in the older class are introduced to classical and modern poetry in order to contrast the subject matter. Texts are well chosen. However, the teacher misses opportunities to encourage expressive reading of the texts and fails to modulate his own voice to set a good example. Nevertheless, a class rendition of a powerful modern poem about pollution does evoke a reflective atmosphere to which pupils respond appropriately.

72. The subject is well managed and teachers observe each other's lessons so that they know how the curriculum is being delivered. This is good practice. Planning is properly drawn from the county's suggestions of work based on the National Literacy Strategy and teachers are aware of the need to avoid repetition in the mixed-age classes. The English policy needs reviewing in light of the new requirements but the broad aims that it advocates remain valid. Assessment procedures are satisfactory with statutory tests at seven and 11 and optional tests for Years 3,4, and five being administered. Pieces of unaided written work are collected together regularly and these provide evidence of progress over time. However, none of these forms of assessment are yet analysed in sufficient detail to reveal precise areas that need attention, either for individual pupils or groups of pupils. Subsequent planning is only influenced by teachers' intuitive understanding of the improvements that are needed and by general evaluations of the successes and failures in lessons once they have been delivered. Resources are good in terms of quantity and quality and the Schools' Library Service provides useful additional books. Homework is used well to support the work in class, particularly in Key Stage 1. A small library is situated in the Key Stage 2 classroom and books are properly classified. However, it is not used often enough for research work and pupils' study skills are not well developed.

MATHEMATICS

73. The broadly average standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The number of pupils taking the national tests is generally less than ten, making comparisons invalid, but the 1999 test results indicate that pupils reach average attainment at both key stages. However, the number of pupils reaching above average attainment in the tests is low, and this reflects the inspection finding that higher attaining pupils do not always work at appropriate levels, particularly in Key Stage 2. The current Year 2 pupils have above average attainment in mathematics, suggesting that the 2000 results will be higher than the 1999 results at Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, learn well and reach appropriate standards relative to their previous attainment. Pupils apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example when representing data in science and making maps in geography, but the development of mathematics across the curriculum is not strongly established.
74. In Year 6, the work in the pupils' books shows that most of them are working within Level 4 in number and algebra, with very little evidence of Level 5. The ground covered and the standard achieved are similar across the year group. Conversations with pupils confirm that some higher attaining pupils are capable of moving into Level 5, particularly in the area of applying their knowledge, for example by solving geometrical problems using their understanding of angular measure. However, lesson observations indicate that they are not often asked to do this. In shape and measure, the pupils currently have below average knowledge and understanding, but are on course to achieve Level 4 by the end of the year. They recognise and describe flat and solid shapes, and group them according to their properties, but do not have a sufficient command of the vocabulary to get the most from this activity, reflecting a lack of appropriate practical experience. In data handling and in using and applying mathematics, they are also working towards average levels. They represent data in simple block graphs and say what the graphs show, but do not use a variety of graphs or undertake challenging investigations.

75. Three quarters of the Year 2 pupils are already at Level 2 in number, shape and measure. They have a secure knowledge of place value, and use this to partition numbers greater than one hundred to make them easier to add. They use some metric units, for example metres for measuring length, and describe common shapes by the numbers of faces, sides, angles and corners. Indications are that this year attainment at Key Stage 1 is above average. Pupils in Year 1 are also making good progress. They can add and subtract within one hundred, apply this skill to shopping, compare lengths using appropriate vocabulary and name common shapes correctly.
76. Pupils' responses reflect the quality of the work that they are engaged in. When the teacher asks challenging questions that make them think, pupils in the junior class respond very positively. They are keen to answer and willing to explain their thinking in detail. The inclusion of team points in the exercise stimulates their interest even further. When they are engaged in routine tasks, their interest and work-rate fall, especially if they have covered similar ground before and there is no group interaction. Attitudes are very positive in the infant class. The pupils concentrate really well, especially when the teacher uses a hundred-square with some missing numbers for them to work out. Their curiosity and enthusiasm greatly enhance their learning. They thoroughly enjoy practical tasks, such as weighing different fruits, and gain a lot through working independently of the teacher in small groups. They show initiative and imagination, and can be trusted to organise themselves and look after the equipment they are using. The rate of progress in these aspects of personal development slows down in the juniors because pupils have fewer opportunities to make choices, organise themselves and work collaboratively at practical tasks. Behaviour is good in all lessons, and pupils are polite and courteous. They respond well when adults intervene in their work with questions or problems to solve.
77. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good overall and very good in Key Stage 1. In the infant class, the teacher plans practical activities that challenge each year-group and gives appropriate support either directly or through well-briefed classroom assistants. The pupils experience a good balance between being taught facts and ideas directly, and having the freedom to learn through first-hand experiences. The teacher makes both the introduction and the activities interesting as well as challenging. For example, a stimulating introduction to weighing involves the pupils in trying to place identical plastic tubs filled with different materials in order of weight. In addition to the fun of guessing the contents – from fresh air to 2 kilogram weights – the pupils have a memorable introduction to the concept that weight does not depend on size. The inclusion of a collection of fruits that they have used to tell a story in the Literacy Hour adds interest and relevance to the practical tasks. The teacher allows sufficient time for younger pupils to play around with the scales for them to come to an understanding of balance and eventually to be able to weigh a single fruit against arbitrary units such as plastic elephants. Meanwhile the Year 2 pupils learn how to weigh the fruits in grams under the teacher's watchful eye. This is a good example of very effective differentiation in planning that allows pupils to learn at their own pace.
78. The teaching in Key Stage 2 includes good challenging questions for each year group in the introductions, and the use of interesting resources such as an overhead projector to teach angular measure. The lessons are carefully planned with activities for each age group and an appropriate whole-class discussion at the end. There is good direct teaching of important skills, such as being able to add two numbers by breaking them down mentally into more easily manageable parts. However, the difficult task of matching activities to the demands of a four-year age spread has not yet been successfully overcome, and in some lessons some of the pupils are not as usefully engaged as they should be. Some of the older, higher attaining pupils, for example, can easily manage to apply their knowledge of angles to new problems but are not challenged to do so, while younger pupils work from text books at computations that they could already do correctly. There is too much teacher-input and

worksheets compared to planned practical activities, and the teachers' interventions are not as well judged as in Key Stage 1, so that the rate of learning is slower. The quality of teaching and learning is therefore sound in Key Stage 2 and sound through the school as a whole, despite the very good teaching and progress in Key Stage 1.

79. The curriculum is planned from the National Numeracy Strategy and supported by an adequate range of resources. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, but do not make best use of this opportunity to point individual pupils towards further explorations and problem solving. They keep samples of their work as a record of the progress the pupils have made. However, the information gathered is not as useful as it could be to set appropriately challenging targets for individuals and year groups because key skills in using and applying mathematics are not focused on sufficiently. The teachers regularly observe each other teaching and use the information they gather to suggest improvements. This is good practice, which could be even more useful if it were made more systematic, aimed at specific aspects of teaching and learning and informed by outside advice. The governor responsible for numeracy has undertaken appropriate training and has visited the school to observe lessons, keeping the governing body well informed about developments. The school has a secure base from which to plan and implement the improvements required to raise standards.

SCIENCE

80. The school's results in the 1999 national tests for 11 year-olds were lower than in previous years. Too much should not be read into this because of the low numbers of pupils involved, but some indications are worth considering. For example, the 1999 results compare unfavourably with results in English and mathematics, whereas in the previous year they were higher than both, and they were higher than mathematics in 1996 and English in 1997. The reason for the unfavourable comparison in 1999 was one extra pupil failing to score Level 4, so this apparent trend may be due entirely to one child having an "off day". The effect of this on the average score would have been reduced however if only one pupil had reached Level 5, but this did not happen, and the absence of Level 5 reflects inspection evidence of a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Over the past four years, girls have achieved consistently higher test results than boys compared to national results for their gender. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress relative to their prior attainment.
81. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported as above average overall. Inspection evidence confirms that attainment is currently broadly average overall at Key Stage 2 with above average knowledge and understanding of forces. Pupils understand the difference between weight and mass, explain gravity and magnetism, and know that an object will remain stationary when acted upon by two equal opposing forces. Their knowledge and understanding of the main organs of the human body and their functions are at least in line with expectations. For example, they describe the heart in appropriate detail and know that its function is to pump blood around the body through the blood vessels. They have a sound understanding of a fair test and the importance of accurate measurements. There was no written work by which to judge their knowledge of materials and their properties, but conversations with pupils indicated average attainment in this attainment target.
82. Pupils at Key Stage 1 also have an above average understanding of forces, reflected in the 1999 teacher assessments and confirmed by inspection evidence. For example, in their books, Year 2 pupils indicate that they know that friction slows a moving vehicle down, and describe how they compare the friction of different surfaces by measuring how far a toy vehicle travels along them after having been allowed to run down a sloping surface. An observation of them working in the classroom confirms that they do indeed have this level

of knowledge, and also shows that they have above average experimental and investigative skills for their age. They use a similar test independently to compare how well two different toy cars travel along a given surface. Their knowledge and understanding of living things and materials are in line with expectations at this stage. Overall, the attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 group is above average.

83. The level of interest in practical experiments is high in both key stages, but the younger pupils show more initiative and enthusiasm than the older ones. Some of the presentation is untidy at both key stages, but the content is sometimes of high quality, especially in Key Stage 1. Pupils organise themselves well in their practical work and use equipment and materials sensibly. They enjoy good relationships, collaborate effectively and sustain their concentration well. The good behaviour in lessons enables the teachers and classroom assistants to concentrate on teaching and helping pupils with their work rather than keeping order. The pupils use a lot of worksheets in Key Stage 2 to record their work and this reduces their interest and enthusiasm. During lesson introductions, some pupils demonstrate good levels of interest by referring to their own research or reading when answering questions. For example, a pupil informs the class that the moon's gravity is six times weaker than the earth's in a lesson on the measurement of mass. Girls show similar levels of interest to boys, and demonstrate at least equal confidence, reflecting the relatively good test results. For example, a junior girl explains the difference between mass and weight quite clearly and confidently and an infant girl explains in great detail how she compared two toy cars for speed capability.
84. Teaching is good in Key stage 1, enabling pupils to learn well. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The infants have more opportunities to engage in practical activities and organise their own experiments than the juniors, and this, coupled with skilled guidance and questioning from the teacher when necessary, results in more secure learning. For example, Year 2 pupils construct and use their own sloping surfaces and measure and record the distance travelled by the toy cars they are comparing. The teacher only intervenes when asked or when absolutely necessary, leaving the pupils to make decisions, take measurements and decide how to record them. This reflects a very good understanding of how pupils learn best at this age. When the pupils record distances travelled in metres and inches, it gives the teacher a useful practical opportunity to clarify a mathematical misunderstanding. In Key Stage 2, the teacher shows good subject knowledge. The lessons are well prepared, with all the necessary materials and equipment to hand for the practical work that is included in each lesson. The introduction gives all the necessary information and leaves room for the pupils to make their own observations as well as answer questions. The pace of learning is good in some groups, for example when Year 3 and 4 pupils decide to estimate the weight of objects to the nearest half Newton rather than to the nearest Newton before they check their estimates using the Newton Meter. The classroom assistant is usefully deployed guiding this group. However, in the same lesson, Year 6 pupils estimate and measure only to the nearest Newton, when they are capable of reading and using the scale measuring fifths of a Newton to estimate more finely and measure more accurately. This example illustrates the need to give the different age and attainment groups within this class separate tasks that aim towards appropriate experimental and investigative skills. The pupils do most of their recording on worksheets, which tends to reduce interest and further limits the scope for variety in levels of challenge.
85. Lesson time is more efficiently distributed in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2 between the teacher talking to the whole class and the pupils engaging in activities, and the younger pupils are also given more freedom to develop their own ways of recording their results. This helps them to think about and deepen their understanding of what they have been doing. Expectations for presentation are not always high enough however.

86. The curriculum has been recently re-organised to enable a specialist teacher to teach Key Stage 2. The scheme of work has been improved to include government and local authority guidelines, and the co-ordinator has put secure assessment procedures in place. These assessments are used to identify areas that need further attention, for example magnets or the use of graphs, and new work is planned accordingly. However, the information provided by the assessments is not used effectively to plan suitably challenging targets for skill development and learning for each age-group. The way the delivery of the curriculum is organised also works against effective learning because all the Key Stage 2 pupils work together on the same theme for a whole afternoon. They have no opportunities to revisit or extend work at other time during the week, and find it difficult to sustain interest and concentration for such a long period. The strategy of deploying a subject specialist to teach such a wide age range at once is also proving ineffective in securing clear pathways for each year-group to develop appropriate skills. These shortcomings may help to explain the slight fall in overall standards since the last inspection.

ART

87. No art lessons were observed during the inspection so judgements on standards are based on the work seen on display. This is of a standard expected for the pupils' ages at both key stages, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Judgements on curriculum coverage are based on discussions with the subject co-ordinator and scrutiny of teachers' planning, the policy document and the schemes of work.

88. The work on display and in photograph albums indicates that pupils work in a suitable range of media, make sound progress and reach standards in line with expectations for their age at each stage. The teachers make good use of the pupils' studies in other subjects to provide inspiration. For example, the pupils have made imaginative models of planets and alien creatures to illustrate HG Wells' story "The War of the Worlds", and an attractive display on wallpaper patterns illustrates good links with mathematics and design and technology.

89. Some work was seen in progress in Key Stage 1, in which the pupils were making paper patterns based on straight and curved lines. The teacher had given the pupils a good starting point by displaying prints of works by the painter Joan Miro, but art from different cultures is less in evidence. The pupils' paintings in this style are of good quality. The work is further enhanced by links to real life through a stimulating display of tyre-tread patterns, including real tyres from the teachers' cars. This linking of subjects and use of familiar real objects and cross curricular links enriches the pupils' experience and encourages effort and real learning.

90. The curriculum has recently been re-organised to good effect to ensure that planning is based on the skills pupils should be learning at each stage rather than on activities. The co-ordinator shows a good awareness of the need to maintain the pupils' enthusiasm by continually challenging them to interpret the world around them and express their responses using their newly acquired skills. The school's stock of examples of artists' work to use as models for this process has been significantly increased.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. The only work seen during the inspection by which to judge standards was in Key Stage 1. The standards achieved are at least in line with expectations. Pupils design and make a vehicle to carry a set number of plastic cubes. They then have to try out their design and say if they think it works and if not, why not. If the model is not up to the task, the pupils have the opportunity to try again. This example suggests that the subject is being taught in a way that encourages the pupils to test, evaluate and improve as well as design and make.

92. The policy and scheme of work indicate that pupils will gain experience with a variety of materials and tools to refine their knowledge, understanding and skills in each area of the subject. They design and make a range of models and products, and are guided towards considering the requirements of the prospective user. The testing, evaluation and modification of products are built into the teachers' planning. The school has responded well to the suggestions made in the last report to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and is well placed to move forward when the current curriculum time constraints are lifted.

GEOGRAPHY

93. As at the last inspection, pupils' learning continues to be satisfactory throughout the school. It was only possible to observe one lesson at Key Stage 2. The weekly lesson for Key Stage 1 pupils took place on a day when the inspectors were not in school. However, the teachers' planning and the pupils' work provide sufficient evidence to make secure judgements.
94. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been studying routes in connection with their transport topic. They make a school trail and show the route that they take using drawings and words to explain their plan. They think about the different forms of transport that might be used to get to various places, some nearby such as the park, and some far away like Liverpool and London. They therefore incorporate discussion about their locality. This is expanded in Key Stage 2, with pupils currently making a detailed study of the village. They look at a local map and know that features on the map are represented by symbols. Younger pupils produce a plan of their living room to understand that a map is a form of plan. Older pupils produce a scale plan of the classroom representing each metre by one centimetre on their paper. This reinforces numeracy skills. In the lesson seen during the inspection, the pupils look at aerial photographs to locate features of the local area and discuss why settlements like their village came to be built in a particular place. This leads them into a survey of census material from 1871 and 1980. They are fascinated to discover that all the occupants of the houses in 1871 were coal miners with large families and that in 1980 only one coal miner lived in the village. The younger pupils have their own work and produce a plan of the village on the computer while others learn about the features of a coal-mine. The majority of pupils make good progress in this lesson. Their awareness of their locality and how it compares with other places is in line with expectations for their age.
95. The lesson is taught well. The teacher has a very good grasp of the topic and has assembled appropriate resources to support the lessons. The planning of different work for the various ages and abilities is commendable. Questions are used effectively to test pupils' powers of reasoning and the teacher has high expectations that they can cope with the work. The introduction is somewhat long for Year 5 and 6 pupils who are given extra information once the other pupils are set to work. Nevertheless, most of them maintain concentration. The topic interests the pupils and good use is made of the local area to stimulate them. They have toured the village and made sketches of various landmarks. Older pupils have drawn their ideas for an ideal village playground and this too captures their imagination.
96. The subject is supported by a satisfactory policy and a scheme of work that lists the broad areas of work to be covered. Termly plans are drawn from this and are detailed, particularly in Key Stage 1. Repetition for pupils in Key Stage 2 is avoided by having a four-year plan showing when topics will be studied. Resources are sufficient to support the curriculum. There are no formal systems by which individual progress is assessed but teachers know their pupils well and assess them intuitively.

HISTORY

97. Since the last inspection, history has maintained its place in the curriculum and progress continues to be satisfactory. As the subject is not a focus of work in Key Stage 2 this term, it was not possible to observe any lessons. However, previous work by pupils was examined, the teacher's planning was scrutinised and an interview was held with a sample of Year 6 pupils to form accurate judgements.
98. Pupils generally make sound progress throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a sense of time and know that in the past, life was different. By listening to the experiences of a visiting speaker they hear how school-life was different and that the only way to get to school was to walk long distances or take a trolley-bus. They are fascinated by these first-hand accounts and very interested in the photographs that the speaker brings. She is well-known to them, being the school caretaker and dinner-lady, and they have a warm relationship with her. They ask sensible questions and are well behaved. The class teacher has prepared the lesson thoroughly with her and provided pictures of a trolley-bus to help the pupils visualise it. The lesson overall provides a worthwhile experience for the pupils and reinforces their learning well. Their awareness of how changes over time affect the way people live is in line with expectations for their age. Key Stage 2 pupils have recently studied the Tudors and Stuarts and have produced a good standard of work that is neatly presented. The work of Year 4 pupils is particularly impressive. The accounts of the Spanish Armada and the Great Fire of London support literacy effectively and display an understanding of report-writing. Pupils say that they have enjoyed the topic and are particularly eager to talk about a visit to Gawthorpe Hall where they experienced life at the time of the Civil War. One boy particularly remembers dressing in armour. They say that they regularly participate in visits connected with history and that such visits bring the topic alive for them.
99. A useful long-term 'map' sets out the history topics to be covered in Key Stage 2 over a four-year period so that pupils do not repeat work. A scheme of work, based on the nationally recommended model, has been adapted for school use and provides a sound framework for planning lessons. Book resources are adequate but the school does not have its own supply of artefacts to support the various topics. The Schools' Library Service provides useful supplementary materials but Year 6 pupils say they would like some 'harder' books to look at. They sometimes use encyclopaedias on the computer to discover information but do not routinely carry out their own research from books. This is inhibiting the development of their independent study skills.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

100. A key issue at the last inspection was to improve provision for information technology (IT) at Key Stage 2. This has successfully been done and significant improvements have been made in the provision of equipment and in establishing a broad curriculum that incorporates all aspect of the subject. The school now has a good supply of modern computers and a satisfactory range of software. There are plans to improve the programs for data-handling in Key Stage 2. The curriculum is planned from a scheme of work that has been properly adapted for school use from the nationally recommended model. Pupils work on computers regularly during the week and their attainment is in line with what is expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This rise in standards, particularly at Key Stage 2, also represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
101. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are confident in using the computers. When using a story making program they have good control of the mouse and drag pictures of the characters they want to use on to their background picture. They then attach speech bubbles to these characters and insert dialogue. They also use an encyclopaedia to find simple information about two

forms of transport. They know how to use the program and which icon to click on to hear the information as well as read it. In Key Stage 2, pupils experience all aspects of the curriculum. Those in Year 3 learn to give orders to a programmable toy so that it follows a route and touches a number of objects on the way. Year 4 pupils use a program that allows them to create a plan of the village in connection with their geography topic. They use the mouse efficiently to import features on to the screen, such as roads, houses and trees, that combine to build their map. With help, they save their work. Year 5 pupils combine text and pictures that they import from 'Clipart'. They change fonts and to use the spell-check to produce an attractive and accurate finished piece of work. Year 6 pupils say that they sometimes use a CD ROM encyclopaedia to find information and they know that if they enter data they can produce pie-charts and graphs to display it. Progress is therefore satisfactory across the school and sufficient time is given for pupils to work on the computers.

102. No direct teaching was observed during the inspection but both teachers give clear instructions about the work that is to be attempted on the computers. They have high expectations that pupils will work independently and responsibly and support staff give invaluable help, showing pupils how to improve their work and save it. Pupils also assist each other to overcome problems. A Year 6 pupil helps those in Year 3 to use the programmable toy correctly. Work in information technology is based on sound planning. Assessment procedures too are satisfactory. Each pupil's attainment is judged against a list of skills that are ticked off when they have been achieved. This enables teachers to judge progress over time. Pupils enjoy their work on the computers and treat them properly. Many of them have machines at home and have well-developed skills already. Nevertheless, they apply themselves conscientiously and work together without arguments, taking it in turns to use the keyboard or the mouse. They produce a good range of work that successfully supports a number of subjects in the curriculum, notably English, mathematics, geography and history.

MUSIC

103. Within the last year a specialist teacher has been appointed to teach music. Because her time in school did not coincide with the days of the inspection, it was not possible to observe any music lessons. Evidence is based on recordings of recent work, a scrutiny of planning and conversations with pupils. This evidence shows that progress has obviously been made in raising the profile of music within the last year. Pupils enjoy the work, make satisfactory gains in their learning and achieve appropriately for their age.
104. The scheme of work has been recently re-written and is in draft. It sets out the elements of music that will be covered over a two-year period but does not give details of the methods or activities that will be employed. It provides a useful framework, however, and is supported by detailed termly plans that clearly indicate the programme of work. All elements of the National Curriculum are properly addressed and recordings show that pupils in both classes are learning to play instruments correctly and produce simple compositions. In the younger class, pupils choose appropriate instruments to represent a space journey. A swanee whistle is used effectively to represent the space capsule returning to earth. Pupils in Year 4 write simple notation for their composition and choose appropriate instruments to make the sounds of animals. Years five and 6 write 'raps' in the proper style and perform them, skilfully fitting the words to a chosen rhythm.
105. In assemblies, music is played as the pupils gather together. They sensibly express their reactions to the music and give appropriate words to describe the effect that 'Mars' from 'The Planet Suite' has on them. They sing reasonably well in tune to a taped accompaniment with clear diction. When singing one song unaccompanied, the younger pupils display a particularly lively approach as they copy each phrase sung by the older

ones. Most pupils display a positive approach to music. They like composing and using instruments and say that they enjoy music with their present teacher.

106. Resources are adequate and are stored neatly on a music trolley. Two recorder clubs have been started, one for beginners and the other for more experienced players. Pupils take part in the annual Up Holland Proms, most recently performing items based on the story of 'Joseph'. They also mount productions for their parents at Christmas. Music is now recovering its place in the curriculum after a period when its status declined. The school is offering its pupils a similar standard of provision to that which was noted in the last inspection report.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, in which Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils demonstrated above average attainment and very good progress in dance and movement. The pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject. They show independence when getting dressed and moving into the hall, and enjoy all aspects of the lessons. They warm up to music, concentrate on their own movements, show consideration for other pupils and listen attentively to the teachers' instructions and suggestions. They sustain their concentration to the end of the lesson and enjoy the final game in which they have to lie absolutely still longer than anyone else.
108. The standard of teaching in the lesson was very good. The teacher engages the interest of all the pupils in the class, including the children under five and the highest attaining Year 2 pupils with references to the previous lessons in which they represented different animals with body shapes and movements. The pupils sometimes become totally absorbed in representing the animals they are thinking of and collaborate very effectively, sometimes spontaneously, to produce elaborate sequences of movements, shapes and balances. They show very good awareness of the accompanying music, responding very quickly and sympathetically to changes of tempo and mood. The teacher praises hard-working and enthusiastic pupils, which spurs the others on to greater effort. In stopping the class periodically to look at particularly effective movements, the teacher gives all the pupils good models for further inspiration. The pupils obviously enjoy the lessons immensely and gain great benefit, both in their physical development and in their independent and collaborative working skills.
109. The subject is well-led and managed. The co-ordinator ensures that all pupils experience a balance of dance, gymnastics and games lessons. He has judiciously supplemented the existing scheme with new ideas to enhance the quality of provision. Recent involvement with a scheme for play equipment for younger children has led to the school's resources being augmented with new, good quality equipment, and the school is sensibly considering extending this involvement to include sports and games. The Reception pupils have an extra time allocation each week to practice ball skills, which prepares them well for their National Curriculum studies. This is good practice, especially in view of the shortcomings in provision for other aspects of their physical development.
110. From discussions with staff and pupils and examination of photographs and other evidence, it is clear that the school makes good provision for the pupils' involvement in competitive sports and games. The school has joined forces with similar schools in the locality to field winning teams in local competitions, and caters for interest in a wide variety of team games. Currently, an extra-curricular after-school gymnastics club attracts about one in five pupils, and the level of participation increases as the weather improves and outdoor activities are included. The pupils are given opportunities to engage in a variety of athletics and orienteering, and the arrangements for swimming ensure that all

pupils have the opportunity to reach the minimum swimming and water-safety standards expected for 11-year olds.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, so reliable judgements cannot be made about the quality of teaching and learning overall. Indications from scrutiny of the pupils' books and the school's scheme of work are that provision is satisfactory and standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils develop an awareness of the importance of religious beliefs in people's lives, and gradually learn about the wide range of religions across the world.
112. The standard of teaching in the lesson seen was unsatisfactory. The lesson was thoroughly planned, but insufficient thought had been given to the underlying theme, which was the significance and symbolism of a meal in a religious community. The chosen religion for the purpose of the lesson was Hinduism, but the Hindi belief in the sacredness of all life was not highlighted, and the lesson was so rushed that the pupils had no time to reflect on what they had been doing.
113. The school's programme of personal and social education gives the pupils opportunities to reflect on their own thoughts, feelings and values, and this helps them to gain an understanding of the importance of the spiritual dimension of life. The religious education syllabus is intricately connected with this, but the school does not always make the most of the connections by guiding the pupils towards reflecting on how different belief systems connect with their own lives and values.
114. The headteacher acknowledges a need for in-service training to help the school deliver the religious education syllabus in an effective and efficient manner. This is particularly important as the school's situation makes it more difficult than in many schools to provide the pupils with a genuine understanding and appreciation of the distinctive religious beliefs associated with the variety of cultural perspectives in contemporary British society.