

INSPECTION REPORT

Tarleton Holy Trinity Church of England

Primary School

Tarleton

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119573

Headteacher: Mrs J Gray

Reporting inspector: Mr N Hardy
29262

Dates of inspection: 8 May 2000 to 12 May 2000

Inspection number: 190761

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road, Tarleton, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 6UP
Postcode	
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend A J Jeynes
Date of previous inspection:	07/10/1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Nicolas Hardy Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
	Design and Technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
	Art	Leadership and Management
	History	
	Geography	
Alan Rolfe Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		How well the school cares for its pupils
		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Davis-Ann Bluett Team inspector	English	How good are the curriculum opportunities offered to pupils?
	Music	
	Under Fives	
Philip Cole Team inspector	Science	How well are pupils taught?
	Information and Communication Technology	
	Physical Education	
	Equal Opportunities	
	Special Educational needs	

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Inspection Quality Division
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Tarleton Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average primary school based on national figures. It has 192 pupils on roll with 97 boys and 95 girls. Many pupils live in the village in a mixture of privately owned and rented properties. Some pupils travel from outside the catchment area to the school. Many of these pupils live on smallholdings and market gardens. Pupils come from a diversity of home backgrounds, socially, economically and educationally. A wide range of educational ability is seen when pupils first enter the school with attainment on entry being average overall. There is little pre-school education in the village and many pupils have had little structured, long-term pre-school experience. The proportion of pupils eligible to receive free school meals at 7% is also below the national average. Almost all pupils have English as their first language – others speak English fluently.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tarleton School provides a good standard of education. The quality of teaching is good. Progress is rapid for children under five and satisfactory overall in the rest of the school. The pace of progress slows a little in early Key Stage 2 and standards are not high enough for some pupils when they leave the school. This is illustrated by the below average number of pupils achieving higher levels in tests at the end of each key stage in 1999. The headteacher has a clear idea where improvements are needed and progress is being made in raising standards in mathematics and science. Governors are supportive of the efforts of the school in raising standards but as yet do not take a sufficiently high profile in monitoring the standards of work across the school. Systems to rigorously monitor teaching and planning, as well as track individual pupils' progress, are at an early stage of development. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in English is better than that for similar schools.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards school are very good.
- Relationships between pupils and adults in school are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good, often very good and sometimes excellent.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are good, social and moral development are very good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is good and provides clear direction for the school.
- The education of children under five is very good.
- The Christian aims and values expressed in school documents are reflected in the work of the school.

What could be improved

- Systems to monitor and evaluate the performance of individual pupils and cohorts through a more rigorous analysis of available data are underdeveloped.
- The monitoring of teachers' classroom performance is insufficiently developed.
- Standards are not high enough in geography and in some aspects of information technology.
- The quality of marking does not sufficiently add to the raising of standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in October 1996, the trend of results achieved by eleven-year-olds has risen at a greater rate than those seen nationally. Results did fall in mathematics and science in 1999 but there are sound reasons for this. Inspection evidence indicates that results will again rise in the current year. All areas identified in the previous inspection report have been addressed but with varying degrees of success. The quality of learning in information technology has improved and standards are now judged to be in line with the national expectation. However some areas of the information technology curriculum still need to be addressed, notably monitoring and control technology. No judgement was given in the last inspection report on geography although a key issue relating to meeting the National Curriculum requirements was included in the report. This has been completed but evidence indicates that attainment in geography is below the national expectation. The education of the under fives is a significant success story and children's opportunities and the quality of teaching in this area are now very good. Some improvements in the procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum and the quality of teaching have been made but there still remains a lack of rigour in carrying out these procedures. The quality of teaching has improved. Pupils' ability to concentrate on their lessons appears to have improved and is now very good. Behaviour has improved and is now also very good. The quality of planning in English and mathematics is consistently good and teachers have very clear ideas about what pupils are to learn. Assessment of pupils' attainment is not always sufficiently systematic and good use is not always made of this information for planning future lessons. Analysis of test results, while of good quality in Year 6 is not sufficiently informing other teachers of areas of weakness in the curriculum. Good practice in this area is not uniform throughout the school. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key	
	All schools			similar schools		
	1997	1998	1999	1999		
English	A	A*	A	A	Well above average	A
Mathematics	A	A*	B	D	Above average	B
					Average	C
Science	A	A*	C	D	Below average	D
					Well below average	E

Results in English, mathematics and science were above the national average in 1999 and while they remained above the average for similar schools in English, they fell to below the average for similar schools in mathematics and science. The trend is one of continued improvement at rates greater than the national picture. The agreed targets set for this year are challenging but achievable. The inspection findings confirm that standards are above

average in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level 5 could be greater especially in mathematics and science. Pupils are skilled in carrying out mental calculations and work is usually provided to suitably extend the learning of more able pupils. Standards in information technology are in line with expected levels. Standards are satisfactory in all other subjects except geography where they are below expected levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good – pupils are eager to come to school and have positive attitudes to their learning. They concentrate well on their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school. All but a very small minority behave well in lessons and this is well controlled by teachers using agreed strategies. The school presents a calm and ordered learning environment.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships between pupils and staff which has a positive effect on behaviour and the quality of learning. Limited opportunities for pupils to extend personal initiative.
Attendance	Very good with no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching seen was never less than satisfactory. During the inspection 77% of the teaching was good or better with 25% of that being very good or excellent. Teaching is uniformly good or better in English and mostly good or better in mathematics. The quality of teaching in science is more variable with almost half the lessons being judged satisfactory. Most of these were in Key Stage 2. In the very good and excellent lessons teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and have high expectations of the quality of pupils' work. Lessons are planned carefully and teachers usually set differing tasks to match pupils' needs. Where lessons are judged satisfactory the level of challenge is lower, expectations are not always sufficiently high and pace is slower. The introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. All teachers have the necessary skills to deliver these strategies. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The quality of learning is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and very good for the under fives. Pupils are keen to explore new ideas and they enjoy success in their learning. Although a small number of pupils have some difficulty sustaining concentration, most work consistently hard when challenged and enjoy their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory – broad and reasonably balanced, although evidence indicates that some subjects have had the time given to them reduced. Meets National Curriculum requirements except in some small areas of information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory for the pupils on the special educational needs register – good for pupils with statements.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for spiritual and cultural development, very good for social and moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall – procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour are good but those for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are less well developed.

The parents' views are largely supportive of the school especially the quality of teaching, the behaviour in the school, the effort pupils are expected to contribute to lessons and the development of mature attitudes. A small percentage of parents feel that their children are not making appropriate progress and that they do not receive sufficient information about the school and pupils' work. Some parents express concern about the timing of homework given to pupils and also the range of extra curricular activities available. Most parents feel confident about approaching the school when they have a problem with their child's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good – the headteacher provides strong positive leadership and gives the school a clear educational direction. Roles and responsibilities of the managers are clearly understood and acted upon.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory – the governing body fulfils its statutory duties but is currently not sufficiently involved in monitoring curriculum standards across the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good awareness of strengths and weaknesses with actions planned to remedy weaknesses through the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good with clear links to development areas in the school plan. The spending of specific grants is carefully considered. There is good control and monitoring of expenditure.

There is a consistent commitment to succeed on the part of the staff. There are sufficient, well qualified teaching staff to meet the needs of the school and they are suitably qualified to teach the age group. Learning resources are well used and appropriately organised. Curriculum improvements are well considered by both the school staff and the governors before finances are allocated.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school. • The behaviour in the school is good. • The teaching is good. • Children are expected to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping the pupils to become mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework is felt to be unsatisfactory by some. • The amount of information about how the pupils are progressing. • The range of extra curricular activities available to pupils.

Pupils certainly appear to be enthusiastic about coming to school and express this in interviews with the inspection team. Behaviour in school is very good and teaching is also good with up to 25% of lessons being very good or excellent. Levels of work and the effort expected are appropriate for most pupils and pupils social and moral development are adding significantly to the development of the children. The amounts of homework provided are, for most pupils, appropriate and help to extend the learning process begun in lessons. The amount of information available to parents in the form of newsletters, pupil reports and meetings regarding the introduction of new national initiatives such as literacy and numeracy is appropriate and provides clear guidance and good quality information. The range of sport based extracurricular activities is satisfactory. However non-sporting activities are more limited and lack variety. Some of these are open to younger pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter school at the beginning of the year they are five with a wide range of abilities with overall attainment being average for pupils of this age. Good and sometimes very good teaching ensures that they make rapid progress in all areas of the under fives curriculum so that by the age of five the majority of pupils are achieving at above the national expectation in most areas. Many pupils have easily met the learning goals for the under fives and are moving on to harder work associated with the National Curriculum. Progress in language and literacy is particularly good with a strong emphasis on listening and speaking. Most pupils are developing a good knowledge of letter sounds and are beginning to learn how to read. Number skills are also well developed with many pupils confidently counting objects and relating their skills to everyday activities. Progress is appropriate in developing children's knowledge of the world around them, in their physical development where a lack of facilities limits progress and in their cultural development. Children make very good progress in their personal development where teachers carefully plan activities to ensure they learn to share and co-operate with one another.

2. The Key Stage 1 national test results in 1999 for seven year olds in English were above the national average in reading and well above the average in writing. When compared with similar schools, results in reading fell to well below average, while results in writing fell to below average. Inspection evidence suggests that results this year in both reading and writing will rise to a point close to the average for similar schools. It is expected that the number of pupils achieving higher levels will also rise. Pupils are given a good start to their learning in the reception class and sound progress is maintained through well planned, good quality teaching. However, not enough pupils attain the higher levels, especially in written tasks. Results in reading improved in 1999 from a point below the national average. Results in writing, while more variable, also improved to a point which is now a little above the average. At this age girls usually out perform boys.

3. The 1999 Key Stage 2 national test results were well above average in English and remained so in comparison with similar schools. Taking the last four years into consideration, results have been consistently above average and improving at a rate greater than that nationally. Results in English were maintained and did not reflect the falls seen in mathematics and science for the same cohort of pupils. Targets set by the school for the year 2000 are challenging but inspection evidence would indicate that they are achievable. Teacher assessments are usually accurate.

4. Key Stage 1 results in mathematics in 1999 were very high with all pupils attaining level 2 or better. However the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was well below the national average. Results were broadly in line with the national average, largely because of the small number of pupils achieving higher levels. Teacher assessments, while being accurate for the number of pupils achieving level 2 were very inaccurate for those reaching level 3. Results in mathematics improved significantly in 1996 rising to near average national results, a trend that despite some fluctuations has been maintained over the last three years so that results for 1999 are marginally above the national picture.

5. At the end of Key Stage 2, results are close to national averages with those achieving the higher level 5 being below average. This represents a significant fall from the position in 1998 when results were well above national figures. Inspection evidence shows

that pupils in the 1999 cohort went through a disrupted period of education with several different teachers during the year. The year group also contained a disproportionately large number of boys. This is of significance because boys usually achieve lower grades than girls at this age. This explains why results against similar schools fall to below the average. The school's targets for this year represent clear challenges for both pupils and teachers, but indications from lessons and from a scrutiny of work suggest that results will improve this year returning to levels similar to those in 1998. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive effect on standards. Observations indicate that lessons are well planned, take account of the specific needs of pupils and move with good pace especially during mental/oral sessions.

6. Science results in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are disappointing. While results were in line with the national average for the number of pupils achieving level 2 or above, no child reached level 3 at Key Stage 1. These judgements are based on teacher assessments of pupils' abilities. In comparison with pupils from similar schools, results were below average and well below for those reaching level 3. Results in Key Stage 2 again show a significant fall from figures seen in 1998. Reasons for this fall appear in the text above. The number of pupils attaining level 4 (the expected level) was close to the average as were the number achieving level 5. Results against other similar schools fall to below average. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 is comfortably in line with the national expectation and at Key Stage 2 they are, after a period of intensive teaching, expected to be above average.

7. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of basic skills. They are well supported through good planning, work that is usually well matched to their needs, and by good quality teaching and support.

8. Standards in information technology are close to the national expectation by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This represents a clear improvement since the last inspection where major weaknesses in the subject were identified. This led to a key issue being included in the report. There are, however some areas where pupils' experience and skills fall below expected levels, notably in control and monitoring.

9. Standards in geography are unsatisfactory because time spent on the subject has been reduced to the point where it is not being satisfactorily covered. In other subjects, standards are satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The great majority of pupils like coming to school and this is evident in almost all lessons. Most pupils are able to identify favourite subjects and a significant number of pupils are involved in the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Almost all pupils show that they are keen to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers' explanations, discuss in a constructive manner and confidently ask questions to clarify what is required of them. In most lessons pupils work with purpose and interest and concentrate well. Most pupils are keen to show and discuss their work, many with obvious pride.

11. The vast majority of pupils behave very well. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is very good and they move around the school in an orderly manner. At lunchtimes and break times pupils play well together and clearly enjoy each other's company. They are polite and friendly and show respect for all adults in the school. The majority of pupils are aware

of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Pupils have a good knowledge of the school behaviour policy and respond well to the systems of rewards and sanctions, readily accepting the principles as an appropriate response to poor behaviour. One pupil has been subject to a fixed term exclusion during the current academic year. The school's procedures for exclusion meet statutory requirements and the use of exclusion was appropriate in the circumstances. The vast majority of parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire considered that the school achieves a good standard of behaviour.

12. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils work well together in pairs and small groups, for example in a Year 5 history lesson when pupils worked in small groups to produce graphs to compare census data. Pupils are able to demonstrate the ability to co-operate well together, to discuss questions in a mature and responsible manner and to listen to and consider the views of others. In all classrooms there are good pupil-teacher relationships. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them both in terms of work and behaviour. Teachers encourage pupils to be involved in lessons and this creates an atmosphere where pupils are confident in asking questions and responding to questions knowing that their contributions would be valued by the teacher. The good pupil-teacher relationships impact positively on pupils' learning.

13. No instances of bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour were observed during the inspection. Pupils said they would not hesitate to seek help if it happened and were confident that incidents would be dealt with quickly and effectively.

14. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in their personal development. In lessons they are able to evaluate the work of their peers and make constructive suggestions to improve performance, for example in a Year 5 physical education lesson they worked in pairs and small groups, applauded good work and used their own strategies to time gymnastic sequences. Pupils in all age groups show a willingness to take additional responsibilities, undertaking a range of duties as classroom monitors, including putting out equipment before lessons and tidying up after lessons. Older pupils supervise younger pupils during wet playtimes. Opportunities for pupils to use their initiative are limited, although recently they sought permission from the headteacher to organise a "Blue Peter" tabletop sale. With only minimal supervision they organised the event and were successful in raising approximately £250 for charitable causes. Pupils seldom have the opportunity to enhance their own learning through research.

15. The school's attendance is good and is above national averages. There are no recorded unauthorised absences. Registration is undertaken morning and afternoon and meets statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching in the school is good overall. Teaching of the pupils in Year 5 and those who are five and under in the reception class is very good and teaching in Years 1 and 6 is consistently good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in any class.

17. Common strengths in teaching across the school are the clear plans that teachers have of what pupils will learn and the effective management of pupils' behaviour, including those who have special educational needs. This clearly relates to the positive and supportive relationships that teachers enjoy with pupils. In the lessons seen, effective planning resulted in lessons that were well prepared and organised. Teachers were able to make good use of classroom helpers to support groups of pupils and in many lessons, they

effectively used appropriately chosen resources, such as historical artefacts, videos, computers and science equipment to facilitate and extend learning opportunities. In a good science lesson in Year 1 for example, the teacher ensured that helpers in the class were well briefed and could use the good quality resources loaned from the museum service. As a result the helpers were able to ask probing questions and provide clear explanations. This ensured all pupils in their groups made good progress.

18. Literacy and most numeracy lessons are well taught and show the characteristics of effective teaching identified above. In these lessons teachers nearly always provide work that is well matched to the needs of the different groups in the class. Additional support is consistently and effectively made available to those with special needs to ensure that they can achieve what the teacher has planned. A good balance is maintained between class-based and group-based work and ensures that there is time for the teacher to develop new learning and for pupils to consolidate new skills and understanding. In many of these lessons and also in other subjects, such as science and physical education teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. This enables them to consistently use technical language and to ask well-focused questions that encourage pupils to think hard in order to provide the detailed answers expected by the teachers. In the best lessons, teachers' confidence is reflected in the challenging pace that is maintained throughout the lesson. This was seen, for example, in a games lesson in Year 3 where pupils worked hard physically throughout the session while at the same time being encouraged and helped to refine and improve their skills. Many lessons in Year 5 are characterised by their good pace but are also enhanced by the teacher's infectious enthusiasm that carries pupils along and deepens their enjoyment of learning.

19. Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection in the teaching of children under five. The teacher has established a good balance between learning through play and more direct teaching, for example, of literacy and numeracy. She plans pupils' learning of the curriculum effectively using the learning objectives for the under fives and carefully plans the early stages of the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Explanations are pitched carefully to ensure that pupils understand new learning and that they know what is expected of them when engaged in a variety of activities. Well chosen games are used to make learning fun and often provide good links between the different activities in the classroom. The 'Dog Bone' game complemented effectively the activities in the class Pet Shop. Computers are used well to support learning across the early years curriculum.

20. There are some relative weaknesses seen in teaching. In some lessons there were overlong and insufficiently focused inputs by teachers. For example, in a science lesson in Year 4 limited time remained to carry out tasks because of lengthy and complex explanations. In Year 3, when both art and science were taught at the same time, the demands of the two groups reduced the effectiveness of the teacher's interaction with pupils and, although there was satisfactory progress more could have been achieved in the lesson. Some effective marking was seen in mathematics, which helped pupils to move forward in their learning. However, too often teachers made comments on pupils' work which were not followed through and therefore did not lead to improvements in pupils' skills, knowledge or understanding. This was the case, for example, in much of the science work seen in pupils' books, where pupils had not responded to the teachers' comments and were not expected to do so.

21. Teachers have a satisfactory and sometimes good understanding of the needs of the children identified on the school's special needs register. They place these pupils in appropriate groups in the class and provide work that enables them to achieve the

objectives planned for the lesson. However, only rarely are the specific needs of most of these pupils as expressed in their individual education programmes, directly addressed through the work provided and their progress overall is satisfactory. A pupil with a statement of educational need receives well targeted additional support and several pupils in lower Key Stage 2 benefit from the sharply focused and skilful teaching of basic literacy skills provided by the support assistant for additional literacy. These children make good progress.

22. Since the last inspection, when teaching was identified as being good, there have been improvements. During this inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching and the proportion of good to excellent teaching has increased from around half of the lessons to just over three quarters of them.

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

23. The curriculum has several areas of considerable strength and overall it is broad, balanced and relevant. All subjects of the National Curriculum are covered and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to each subject. However requirements are not fully met for information technology particularly in Key Stage 2, a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection. There have been many improvements made in information technology, with pupils now using it as an integral part of their work in most subjects except in music. There is however, insufficient attention given to the elements of monitoring and control within the subject. In geography the coverage and understanding of the subject is insufficient to meet the national requirements. The English curriculum is now good in most aspects, but particularly in the many worthwhile opportunities that pupils have to write in other subjects. This has a good effect on the standards of writing they achieve. The breadth of the physical education programme in Key Stage 2 is a strength. Guidance for all subjects is either in place or under review. This gives support to teachers when they plan lessons and helps them to focus on teaching important skills. However not all the schemes are well established and there is a lack of systematic monitoring of subjects in the curriculum to ensure that basic skills are developed in well planned stages.

24. The National Literacy Strategy is fully in place and implemented very well throughout the school. The Numeracy Strategy is a more recent development, but both are having a notable effect on pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. The Additional Literacy Strategy is also having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers deliver these strategies with sufficient vigour and pace to enable their pupils to achieve appropriate or better skills for their ages.

25. The curriculum for the children under five is good and very skilfully planned to ensure that they make a positive start to school. A wide range of purposeful activities is provided which offer the children many first hand experiences. Children are effectively extended within the appropriate provision so that many are already working towards National Curriculum programmes of study. Reception and Key Stage 1 teachers work closely together to ensure that children build on what they have previously learned in the reception class when they enter Year 1.

26. Staff are committed to equal opportunities for all and work hard to ensure that these are achieved in practice. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school and are rarely withdrawn from class. Individual education plans vary in quality and usefulness. For pupils with statements they include very clear, specific targets, which are used to inform their teaching. For other children with special educational needs, reviews

and individual plans are often too general. In practice, classroom teachers and support assistants meet their needs well and they make satisfactory progress. Good links have been made with the special needs co-ordinator at the local high school and constructive relationships have been established with other departments. These ensure that pupils make a smooth transfer to secondary education. Reception staff visit local playgroups and all pre-school children visit school several times before starting. This gives most young children effective support to settle quickly and happily into school life.

27. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is given priority throughout the school. Appropriate sex education is taught as an integral part of the PSE/Science programme, with Year 6 pupils having specific sex education during their final term. Procedures are in place to inform pupils about the misuse of drugs mainly through the "PRIDE" project and the Life Education Centre. This project covers a wide range of issues for both children and parents and is seen as an essential part of the school's curriculum. Booklets, entitled "We are special", give a clear indication of the effectiveness of this initiative. Teachers use circle time activities to further develop strategies such as "Keeping safe on the way to school".

28. The curriculum is enhanced by a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities. These include competitive and friendly sports, a book club, a choir and occasionally a gardening club. There has also been a Booster club for older pupils which has had a positive effect on the learning and the progress that they make.

29. A range of educational visits locally and further afield effectively supports the curriculum. Pupils have visited places such as Martin Mere, the zoo and St Anne's and Year 6 pupils spend time at an outdoor pursuits centre where they have opportunities to rock climb, canoe and abseil. Visitors to the school have included the police and their horses, the school nurse, a poet and a group of wind players. A Japanese visitor spent a term in the school and her work with children and teachers contributed strongly to aspects of the curriculum as well as to their cultural education. Good links are made with the local community. Pupils visit the church often and the vicar is a regular and welcome visitor into school. Parents and friends support the work of the school by organising events for the children such as Easter competitions with gardens in a tin lid, Health week with aerobics and even teaching Year 6 to waltz! All of these contribute considerably to pupils' learning. A further useful development would be a link with a local industry.

30. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall is a strength of the school which has been maintained since the last inspection. A very positive, caring and Christian ethos is evident within the school. Pupils are taught appropriate values and they develop pride and confidence in themselves. Combined with the good role models of staff, these have a positive impact on the behaviour of pupils and their very good attitudes to learning.

31. Pupils' spiritual development is good. It is promoted well through school assemblies, collective worship and many informal as well as planned opportunities in lessons. A good climate for thinking about worship is firmly established. Pupils are able to reflect on the deeper meanings of their lives particularly following well chosen stories based on challenge such as that about Edith Cavell. They are able to develop their inner spirituality often; for example, when considering the catastrophes happening around the world or when writing their personal versions of The Creation. Pupils are taught that prayer is a way of communicating with God. They respond positively showing reverence whilst saying prayers. They also produce some creative but moving pieces of work related to "The Millennium Book of Prayers", "People We Love", and their comparisons of "The Lion,

the Witch and the Wardrobe” with the Easter Story to show how good usually overcomes evil. Religious education lessons enable pupils to understand what Christianity means to some people, and what people of other faiths believe. They are able to experience awe and wonder; for example, when a group of children were exploring magnets in a science lesson, their reactions were magical.

32. Moral understanding is promoted well through assemblies but is also evident throughout the school. Values of honesty, fairness and a sense of what is right and wrong are promoted very effectively. The school’s behaviour policy is a helpful guide for teachers, but pupils learn to put their thoughts and ideas into action by creating their own rules. These are all reflected in the general high quality of behaviour around the school and the very real respect that everyone has for each other.

33. Pupils’ social development is also very good. From a very early stage they are encouraged to discuss, negotiate and resolve problems. This was well illustrated in a maths quiz when teams had to confer before giving a response and fair play was much in evidence. Pupils regularly work in pairs or groups and there are many instances of older children helping younger ones especially at lunch times. Infant pupils, for example, are sufficiently confident to ask Year 6 to explain to them the meaning of “ellipse”, whilst the youngest children had as much fun trying out some technology designs as Year 6 had had making them. Wider community links, such as when High School pupils write stories for primary pupils, reinforce their social skills. To help those less fortunate than themselves, pupils sometimes arrange and organise sales to raise funds for charities.

34. The cultural development of pupils is good. They are helped to learn to understand their own culture and to appreciate the diversity of other cultures through many first hand experiences. The Japanese visitor shared many aspects of her culture – the clothes, the toys, the paintings, the food and the writing. A South American Festival of Dance enabled every class to learn a part of the dance or music. Pupils learn about past cultures in history, in art and music they learn to appreciate the culture of creativity, and in religious education they study a range of world religions. Although pupils celebrate the Jewish Passover by making and eating a seder meal, they have few opportunities to visit different places of worship. One class studying “Basia’s Birthday Present” in their reading group work, were able to give sensitive responses about their views on the dilemmas faced in the social, moral and cultural issues raised in the book.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for both staff and pupils. Pupils and staff are well known to each other and relationships both inside and outside the classroom are good. Pupils are confident that they can approach teachers should they have any problems with their schoolwork or their personal difficulties, and that appropriate support and guidance will be given.

36. The school has satisfactory procedures to support those pupils identified as having special educational needs and for involving parents in the review of their educational targets and progress.

37. The school provides a warm friendly working environment in which pupils feel safe and secure. There is a sound health and safety policy and satisfactory procedures. However, there is a need to improve risk assessment procedures and to ensure that assessments of dangerous substances are brought up to date.

38. The school's procedures for Child Protection are satisfactory. The teacher with responsibility for child protection has received appropriate training and has a good understanding of child protection matters. However the policy does not contain specific guidance on the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and the appropriate actions to be taken by staff if they suspect a child has been the subject of abuse. Whilst these procedures have been discussed informally at staff meetings, there is a need to ensure that all staff receive regular in-service training to maintain and update their knowledge and understanding of these procedures.

39. Procedures for monitoring attendance and promoting good behaviour are good. In almost all lessons teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils are aware of how they are expected to behave. Pupils react well to the system of rewards and sanctions, which teachers apply consistently. Bullying is rare and there are well established procedures to deal with incidents.

40. The school's arrangements for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic progress are variable between subjects and across the school. There are effective procedures to assess pupils as they enter the school and these assessments are used well by the teacher to plan early learning. Where subject co-ordinators work with class teachers to standardise assessment procedures, they are successful in creating consistent records of pupils' attainment and progress that are used to inform future planning. With the exception of English and mathematics, there are weaknesses in the school's assessment procedures. Records of pupils' attainment in science, information technology and in the foundation subjects are informal with no common thread through the school. This inhibits the passing of useful and consistent records to receiving teachers. Analysis of the results of compulsory and optional testing carried out in the school are not sufficiently rigorously completed to be of use in identifying areas of weakness in the curriculum. Good practice does exist in the school in Year 6 where a detailed analysis of mathematics and science results has been completed. This provides the teacher with valuable information so that planning and teaching can be targeted towards problem areas. Detailed analysis using information technology is yet to be used to track the progress of individual pupils ensuring that each pupil is appropriately challenged and their thinking extended.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has established a sound partnership with parents. It recognises the important role that parents have in the education of their children and encourages them to play an active part. Parents at the meeting with the inspectors were positive about most aspects of school life. They considered that the school provided a good standard of education, promoted appropriate attitudes and values and that behaviour was good. Some parents expressed concern about the schools homework policy and, whilst most were satisfied with the amount of homework their children were expected to complete, many indicated that they did not always know when homework was set.

42. Parents' responses to the questionnaire were very positive in most areas of school life. However, a significant minority of parents expressed concerns about the school keeping them informed of their child's progress, the range of curricular activities and, to a lesser degree, the quality of teaching. The school provides a good standard of information about school events as well as pupils' progress. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and provide appropriate information on progress and areas for improvement. They also allow space for parental responses, an example of good practice. Parents are

provided with monthly newsletters that provide good quality information about the school and its activities, including the topics pupils are to cover each term. The school prospectus and governors' annual report contain much useful information and meet statutory requirements. Parents are provided with information leaflets about the school behaviour and discipline policy and advice on how parents and carers can support their children's numeracy skills. Parents of children who have special educational needs receive a comprehensive information leaflet detailing the school's special education needs policy and procedures and are appropriately involved in the review of their child's progress and individual education plan.

43. Formal links with parents are good. The home-school contract clearly defines the role of the school and parents. The policy is well supported by the vast majority of parents. The school invites parents to two meetings a year to discuss their children's progress. These are well attended. The school actively encourages parents to assist in classrooms and several were observed helping in lessons, for example with computers. Parent helpers receive a "Parent Helper" book designed to assist them to be effective helpers. Parents were also appropriately invited to be part of the school's drug education programme. The school receives active support from the "Friends of Tarleton Holy Trinity School" who work hard to support the school financially by organising fund raising and social events. Their efforts are much appreciated by the headteacher and staff and the money raised is put to good use to enhance learning resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, a judgement that is broadly in line with that made in the previous report. The governors are conscientious and supportive of the school. However, they are not sufficiently involved in the rigorous monitoring of standards in the school and this results in a limited understanding of its real strengths and weaknesses. As yet, governors do not monitor spending systematically enough by relating spending decisions to expected outcomes. However, they do fulfil their statutory duties.

45. The headteacher sets a clear educational direction for the school. The ethos within the school effectively focuses on its caring and supportive role. The importance of both these aspects is reflected in the hard work, concentration, very good behaviour and consideration of the needs of others are a constant feature.

46. Currently, the school is focusing on raising pupils' attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science, but there is a need for more rigour in the pursuit of higher standards. A good start has been made in identifying areas of weakness in mathematics and science at the upper end of Key Stage 2 but this good practice has not developed sufficiently in other areas of the school. Quality information gained from this would enable teachers to plan more effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those of higher ability. Monitoring of teaching is carried out by the senior management team, but is not yet sufficiently regular or rigorous.

47. Assessment procedures are still underdeveloped in many curriculum areas, although good practice in the assessment of pupils' work exists in English and mathematics.

48. The senior managers form a successful team in running the school. The quality of subject leadership is good with many teachers being responsible for their own subject

specialist areas. This creates a suitable body of expertise for colleagues to draw upon when planning lessons. Subject leaders examine planning from other age groups and assess standards of work across the school. This is good practice. While there are policy documents for all subjects, many are out of date and in need of review. Some are in draft form awaiting agreement from staff and governors. A desire to improve the quality and standard of education and care of pupils is a significant feature of school life across all areas.

49. The school's development planning is good and accurately identifies appropriate priorities. Detailed costings are not, however, included. Financial management is satisfactory and the headteacher and clerical officer provide good information to governors. Resources are provided in line with priorities identified in the school's development plan. Recent spending priorities have been equipping the school for the implementation of the literacy and numeracy national initiatives. Funds have been prudently spent on other curriculum areas such as physical education, information technology and the under fives to raise standards across the school. Grants provided for specific purposes, such as support for pupils with special educational needs and those available to improve computer technology are used effectively for these purposes. The school is beginning to use the principles of best value in some areas of its decision making. However, practice is not yet carried through into policy in sufficient areas. The school uses IT efficiently to aid administration. Its use in recording pupils' attainment and progress based on assessment evidence is yet to be fully explored.

50. There are sufficient staff to meet the curriculum needs of the school. Consideration has been given through the appointment procedures to ensuring that areas of limited staff expertise are covered, for example in science. There are effective systems in place for the induction of new teachers, for training student teachers and for supporting supply teachers. School staff regularly undertake training to improve their professional skills reporting back to colleagues where appropriate. This is closely linked to the needs of the school as expressed in the school's development plan and to the specific needs of the teaching staff as identified through the school's appraisal procedures.

51. The accommodation is mostly adequate although at least one classroom is cramped and ineffective use is made of the space available in the very large school hall. Externally there is limited hard surface area in the playground and some remedial work is needed to the school's exterior. Internally, the display in many classrooms is of good quality and enriches the learning environment. Learning resources are at least sufficient in all areas and are efficiently used.

52. Pupils leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 with above average attainment. Progress is rapid in the early years and satisfactory through the rest of the school. Pupils are taught well and their attitudes to work and school life are good. Expenditure per pupil is average. Taking into account all those factors, the school is judged to provide satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. To raise further the standards of attainment and the good quality of provision apparent in many aspects of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- i) further develop the use of assessment so that teachers can:
 - clearly identify the needs of different groups and individuals in their class.
 - use assessment to set short term individual targets for all pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
 - provide appropriate challenge for higher as well as lower attaining pupils.
 - use assessment more effectively to inform whole school planning (see paragraphs 40, 46, 87, 95)
- ii) further improve the mostly good quality of teaching by:
 - monitoring teaching more rigorously and consistently and with clear criteria to recognise strengths and to identify areas for improvement (see paragraph 44).
- iii) improve standards in geography by:
 - giving pupils a broader experience of the geography curriculum;
 - giving the subject an appropriate allocation of time (see paragraphs 23, 108).
- iv) ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum in information technology are covered (see paragraphs 23, 117).
- v) improve the quality of teachers' marking so that it becomes a useful tool in raising the standards of work (see paragraph 20).

54. In addition to the key issues the following less important areas for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- i) explore the principles of “Best value” in greater depth so that the school can benefit from a higher quality of service at a more economical cost;
- ii) develop strategies to raise the proportion of pupils attaining level 3 at Key Stage 1 and those attaining level 5 at Key Stage 2.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	21	52	23	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y[] – Y[]
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	192
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y R – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
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.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	14	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	22	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88	88	96
	National	82	80	86

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	10
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	23	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92	96	92
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	21	9	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	24	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80	73	83
	National	70	69	80

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83	83	87
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff: Y[R] – Y[7]

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	276,850
Total expenditure	278,466
Expenditure per pupil	1450
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,928
Balance carried forward to next year	44,312

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	193
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	40	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	47	12	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	55	1	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	55	14	3	0
The teaching is good.	44	42	8	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	40	22	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	28	5	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	49	10	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	43	47	5	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	53	6	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	41	18	7	16

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. At the time of the inspection, 5 children were under five. Children who are under five are taught in the reception class; there is no nursery. In their first term, they have the option to attend part-time. There is a broad range of attainment, but taken overall, children have skills and abilities that are typical for their age when they start. By the time they are five, they will have made good progress and many will have exceeded the levels expected for their age.

Personal and Social Development

56. Children make very good progress and their attainment is better than expected for their age. Their development in this area is fostered well through the good role models of staff who are sensitive to their needs and create a caring and purposeful atmosphere. Children's attitudes to learning are very good with staff regularly stressing the importance of sharing and playing together. They co-operate well in groups, often discussing with each other to resolve problems. This was observed in the 'Pet Shop', when children talked about the 'stock' and the needs of their animals. Adults intervene appropriately in play situations to help develop children's language and move their learning on. The children are confident to contribute their ideas and express their feelings. They concentrate and persevere well when completing tasks, as was seen when playing with small world toys or whilst finishing written work. They respond confidently to adults and are well behaved, courteous and polite. Good attention is paid to promoting maths and language within the personal and social context. This was clearly illustrated during a numeracy session when children negotiated and shared in a maths game, waiting patiently for their turns and older children often helping younger ones. They all know the expected routines and move quickly and enthusiastically to each new activity. The children are given good opportunities to reflect and they do this well during the times of silence in assemblies.

Language and Literacy

57. By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to attain higher standards than expected for their ages. The development of their language and literacy skills is good and already they are effectively working within the National Literacy Strategy. Rapid gains are made in their listening and talking skills. Staff take every opportunity to improve the range and quality of their talking by asking focused open-ended questions. Children listen carefully to adults and to each other. They take careful note of instructions so that they know exactly what is expected of them and they also listen quietly when other children are explaining to a group what they have done. Many innovative play situations are set up such as the Pet Shop and Hairdressers where specific tasks guide their learning. The use of a puppet theatre extends children's language and conversational skills in a fun way. Their 'performances' are sometimes recorded on video enabling them to appraise and enjoy their work. Their understanding of new words was illustrated clearly in their ability to explain the meaning of 'camcorder'. A small group playing with the dolls' house were using mature language and imagination to act out a social role-play situation with small dolls.

58. The children know many rhymes which they enjoy singing and they can recognise rhyming words. Most are developing a good knowledge of the sounds and letters of the alphabet, supported effectively with matching games and appropriate programmes on the computer. Children make a good start in learning to read. A number can already follow

simple text and make good efforts to work out new words for themselves. The youngest group know where to start reading, can recognise the title and the author. By the end of the session, they were able to match, name and 'read' the five colours in a book. A volunteer and a student help regularly with reading in the classroom and children also take reading books home to share with their parents.

59. The progress in writing has accelerated considerably recently. Almost all children can write their names with good control and they use capital letters correctly. Several can write simple sentences independently with correctly spelled words and some punctuation. Emphasis is put on learning the high frequency words and finding other words for themselves. Children often become authors making their own books, such as the one about a 'Dog'. Children's writing is shown to be valued by displaying their work; some entitled "We Love God" indicates a depth of feeling and understanding. Many books are also made, for example, following a police visit a "Criminal File" shows that children are beginning to understand alliteration. Steady progress is made in handwriting through the year, moving from patterns and copy writing to well formed, neat letters and words.

Mathematics

60. The room has a strong mathematical atmosphere and every opportunity is taken to develop the children's mathematical learning, both incidentally and planned. Consequently the provision is very good and many children are already attaining the desirable learning outcomes or better. Emphasis is placed on counting, sorting and sequencing numbers, for example, sorting sets of dogs' biscuits, ordering numbers on a snake ladder and using the "Number Train" programme on the computer to count on. Almost all children can count and write accurately to ten and many can count to twenty and beyond. Forwards and backwards counting is effectively reinforced by counting real money into a purse. Further learning about money takes place in the shop, where simple shopping cards invite the children to make purchases, pay for them and get the correct change. Children are confident and successful in carrying out these simple addition sums. Some understand the reverse problem and correctly complete simple subtraction problems. The very thorough teaching consolidates the previous work by checking out answers on a number line. All children know and can identify the basic geometrical shapes especially as their groups are named after the shapes. A playground session included singing "When Goldilocks went to the House of the Bears" to reinforce earlier work on size, and jumping activities to practise counting on. Children have a good understanding of mathematical language such as "more than", "less than" and "total". They record their findings competently and can form most numbers correctly. A good range of mathematical games and puzzles are used effectively to reinforce their knowledge and practise their skills. The children really enjoy their maths, are responsive and keen and make very good progress.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

61. Good teaching enables children to learn at a steady pace so that by the end of the reception year most are likely to attain at least the expected standard. In a very good introduction to a history session, children were asked "What is true?". Photographs of the teacher and her pets were used as evidence. Children are able to recognise when a photograph is old and so increase their understanding about the past. This gives them a good opportunity to talk about their families and events in their lives. Many offer sensible suggestions and valid reasons for their family photographs. By the end of the lesson they can successfully make a simple time line and order "a long time ago", "in the past" and "now".

62. Children know a great deal about animals; as well as their shop and know how to care for their pets. They are able to observe, talk about and record in paint the different movements of a dog, a fish and a snail. Visits are made to a zoo where they learn about animals from other countries and to Martin Mere where they can see the many breeds of birds. A recent visit from the police resulted in a wider knowledge of people who help us which was reinforced in role-play situations.

63. Most children can fold, cut, join and stick a variety of materials – these skills are competently used in extension activities for literacy and numeracy. Children also make jointed puppets for their theatre. Children operate technological equipment confidently. Computers are in regular use with topics planned specifically to include IT. Children have a sound knowledge of the programs and have good control of the mouse. Many can change the size and the font independently. Their problem solving skills are further developed by programming the “Roamer” to successfully avoid obstacles on the hall floor.

Physical Development

64. Because there is no easy access for children to have regular daily activities outdoors, very careful planning is needed to enable them to experience a variety of cross-curricular activities set out in the large hall for a whole morning. They have opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills using textiles, construction, large apparatus, art and water play. All children, regardless of ability, are supported well and challenged to extend their manipulative skills. They demonstrate the ability to observe and discuss what they are doing both with their peers and with adults often extending their descriptive vocabulary.

65. Standards seen in all activities indicate that the children’s physical skills are above those expected nationally. For example, they are able to thread and sew well and they learn to adeptly fit together construction kits with fastening nuts and bolts. They climb with safety and confidence and develop good social as well as physical skills when using large and small apparatus and wheeled toys. Their levels of concentration and application to the well thought out tasks are exemplary. Further time in the hall enables children to satisfactorily develop different bouncing, jumping and moving skills. Using beanbags and balls they work hard to improve their co-ordination skills. They move freely around at varying speeds and know about finding space. In all these activities the children respond to their teacher’s instructions and high expectations very positively.

Creative Development

66. Children’s creative development is of at least the standard expected and sometimes better. They have opportunities to explore sounds by playing percussion instruments. Most know a good range of songs, including “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”, “Hickory Dickory Dock” and “Nicky, Nacky Noo”. They sing in tune and enjoy doing actions. They learn to perform in front of others, for example in assemblies, but also watch their own attempts on video. Many very good role-play situations are set up to help develop the children’s imaginations. Their skills on the computer enable them to create imaginative pictures, usually directly linked to first-hand experience. Through exploring with materials such as paint, sand, water and dough they improve their hand and eye control. Most children know their colours and, whilst some of their paintings show good brush control, they have limited opportunities to mix paints to create new colours. Because the paint is usually ready mixed and the brushes and paper are on their tables, they are rarely able to make their own decisions about media and implements. Some close observational drawings of plants indicate real care and perseverance.

Teaching

67. The quality of teaching in all six areas of learning is always good and sometimes very good. This ensures that almost all children attain the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. Older and more able children are extended effectively so that they are working towards Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. The reception classroom is very well organised and managed. A stimulating and caring environment has been created where display is used to good effect and to celebrate achievement. This secure and happy place enables all children to learn and develop at a good pace.

68. The teacher and the nursery nurse have very good knowledge of the intended learning outcomes as well as very good understanding of the needs of young children. Activities that are imaginative and often innovative successfully interest and motivate the children. Valuable first hand experiences often include an element of fun with staff interacting appropriately. Well-planned lessons identify specific skills to be learned and clear explanations ensure that all children know exactly what is expected of them. Tasks are well matched to the needs and abilities of the children, particularly those who require extra help or support. Very good attention is given to supporting the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

69. The high expectations of staff, of both work and behaviour, result in the children making good progress at the start of their education. A real strength of the teaching is the focused questioning to make the children think and extend their learning. In this way staff are also able to assess the quality of their learning and understanding. Attainment and progress against skills extracted from the planning are recorded and used purposefully to inform future planning. Although the children are unable to have daily outdoor physical activities, staff make the best use possible of the available facilities.

70. The school has fully addressed the key issue in the previous inspection by developing greater opportunities for consolidating and extending the pupils' learning.

ENGLISH

71. The school results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 were above average with the number of pupils attaining Level 5 being well above average. Pupils' performances were also well above results in similar schools. Standards in tests have risen since 1996 more than the national trend and more than in mathematics and science. There has been little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Governors have set targets for test results this year. In 1999, the school failed to meet their targets by a small margin, but there were good reasons, related to changes in staffing, and the school is making satisfactory progress towards achieving them this year. The inspection finds that standards are above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection.

72. The results for seven-year-olds in 1999 indicate that more pupils than the national average reach the expected standards or above in both reading and writing but the number reaching the higher standard, level 3, is below average. Although results fluctuate because of differing cohorts, school results show improvement over time so that overall results now in reading are in line with those expected nationally and in writing they are a little above average. In 1999 both reading and writing improved to their highest point in the school's recent past. The trend also shows that over time girls are achieving more highly than boys. In the teacher assessments, including speaking and listening, the proportion of pupils

attaining the standards appropriate for their age in all aspects of English was above the national average. At the higher Level 3 only speaking and listening was above, writing was in line and reading was below average. The inspection finds that standards are above average in speaking and listening and writing, but average for reading. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and reflects the school's recent emphasis on literacy.

73. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, pupils appropriately extend their understanding about the ways to approach different types of text and build up preferences in their reading. They are developing a suitably systematic approach to decoding text and are aware of the need to use vocabulary to engage the reader. In a lesson based on "Fantastic Mr Fox", pupils were able to give examples from the text to justify descriptive adverbs and they developed a good understanding of the characters through the adjectives. Their written accounts enable them to produce good phrases to describe the characters and their personalities, using more imaginative "talking" words such as "exclaimed" and "gasped". When reading a story as a play, pupils display their good knowledge of how to read for an audience. A group working as response friends to an 'author' made sensible suggestions for improvement sometimes using technical vocabulary correctly. In Year 5 pupils extend this knowledge by competently evaluating persuasive writing. They recognise rhetorical questions and use comparative and powerful words, such as 'propaganda' in their written work. By the age of eleven pupils are knowledgeable about different systems that are used to gain information from books though the library does not appear to be used sufficiently for research projects. They can make informed guesses about difficult words and most read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. They express clear views about their preferences, both orally and in written form. They have a mature understanding of quite complex issues such as how advertisers manipulate their readers. They know what symbolism is and can recognise examples in their shared book on myths and legends. They confidently and successfully use homophones, puns, metaphors and similes in their written work. Pupils build on their good earlier knowledge so that writing improves rapidly in Years 5 and 6. Spelling and handwriting progressively develop with pupils confidently using and spelling often complex words correctly, and able to adapt their well-formed writing to specific tasks. By the end of the key stage their writing is interesting to read. Ideas are sustained and developed and most have a good understanding about the basic conventions of grammar and punctuation. They use well-chosen and sometimes adventurous words to create the desired effect and work is well presented and often illustrated carefully. Throughout the key stage there is particularly good writing of poetry. Class work entitled "Recipe for a Year 3 trip created, cooked and served up by Year 3" includes "ingredients, 32 children nicely wound up" and "method, shake well until two feel sick". Kennings written by Year 6 use evocative and original rhyming couplets; Year 4's "Scary poems" are descriptive and imaginative.

74. Attainment in Key Stage 1 covers a wider range. All pupils are developing enjoyment in reading. Some are less confident than others in using different strategies to make use of words they do not immediately know. When reading aloud most are fluent and quite expressive. The most able readers can confidently discuss the plot, describe the characters and identify their favourite authors. One child, for example, said he liked The Bible best and went on to talk about various parts of it and explain clearly what they meant. Others know and understand about alphabetical order, index, glossary and contents page. Standards in writing are mainly good. By the age of seven many pupils are developing stories logically, using well-formed sentences and interesting vocabulary. They often write for a clear purpose, such as "How to look after your pet" or "How to bake a cake". From the youngest age pupils can recognise and use rhyming words and repetitive patterns. A group of Year 1 pupils successfully wrote a poem in the style of 'Bedtime Song' by Quentin

Blake. Spelling and punctuation in Key Stage 1 is good. The majority correctly know where to put capital letters and full stops; some can use speech marks, apostrophes and question marks. At the end of the key stage, handwriting is neat, well formed and joined.

75. Throughout the school, pupils' skills in speaking and listening are good and often very good. They almost always listen attentively and with interest to their teachers and to their peers. Adults encourage them to comment on what they have seen and heard. Even the youngest can talk confidently about their feelings and they can state preferences, giving reasons for their choice. Older pupils develop their skills, adapting their talk to suit the occasion. They happily confer with each other and make very logical contributions, exemplified in a lesson exploring powerful language. The most able can analyse their thoughts before answering and then explain their views clearly and concisely. Plenary sessions are very successful in enabling pupils to display many aspects of their skills in speaking and listening. Those with special educational needs take a full part and as in reading and writing, make steady progress to attain satisfactory standards. Pupils' skills in all aspects of literacy have a positive effect on their learning in other subjects.

76. In both key stages, teaching and learning are never less than good. In Years 5 and 6, they are very good or excellent. All teachers are hardworking and organised. Lessons are planned well and all staff are competent and keen, especially in their implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. This has had a very positive impact on their pupils' learning. Teachers have suitable subject knowledge and in Years 5 and 6 they are particularly enthusiastic about teaching English. This, combined with often novel ideas and good use of humour, strongly motivates pupils to work hard and to learn. In Year 5, for example, pupils worked in pairs to produce their own Mr Men books in the style of Hargreaves, and then designed their cover on the computer. In Year 2, the use of a puppet called Mr Crow, who had written a poorly spelled story, resulted in pupils making good gains in their understanding of spelling rules. They respond enthusiastically to the pace of lessons. Purposeful activities and tasks are generally well matched to the pupils' levels of understanding and clear focus is given in all classes to the systematic development of pupils' basic skills. All teachers have high expectations about what their pupils will achieve. When these are shared so that pupils know, and when they are based on assessment information targeted to the next stages of their learning, very good progress is made. Throughout the school, there are good relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to use information technology to further their learning in English. Pupils with special educational needs and those having specific difficulties often consolidate or practise their previous learning on computers. They are supported effectively by classroom assistants or additional adults, who are always clearly briefed. In the main, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, but there are isolated instances of pupils becoming restless. Teachers deal firmly with them and they quickly return to their tasks. Marking is mostly satisfactory, but is not always followed through to make sure that pupils improve the standards of their work. Where provided, good formative comments help pupils to improve their work further. Homework is set regularly and is generally effective. When it involves demanding tasks related to the targets for individual pupils, as in Year 2 and Year 6 especially, pupils work hard to complete their work.

77. Pupils' attitudes are good. They know the expected routines and settle very quickly in lessons. Their very good behaviour, whether working individually or in groups, contributes strongly to the standards they attain.

78. Subject management is good even though the co-ordinator only took up her post at the beginning of the school year. She is enthusiastic and has produced a thorough draft

policy to guide the staff, but a scheme of work is not yet in place. Each teacher has been provided with Literacy Learning Targets to inform planning for individual pupils. These are monitored regularly to ensure progress. Assessments to find out what pupils know, understand and can do in the National Curriculum are used well to plan the next stage of learning. Recent analysis of assessments is helping to identify shortcomings so that staff can plan accordingly.

MATHEMATICS

79. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for the end of Key Stage 1 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was very high in comparison with the national average. However, the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3 was well below the average. When comparing these results with those of pupils from similar backgrounds results fall below the average. Boys tend to achieve more highly than girls at this age, a reversal of the national trend. Over the last four years results at Key Stage 1 have shown a rise from a position well below the national average to a point in 1999 where results are now a little above the national average. By Key Stage 2 the number achieving the expected level 4 is close to the average as is the number of pupils achieving the higher level 5.

80. Results in 1999 were below those normally expected for the school. This was because the cohort of pupils contained a larger than normal lower ability group and had been taught by several different teachers during the year. The school's normal trend of results indicates improvement at rates greater than the national rise. Inspection evidence confirms that results are likely to improve again this year. When compared with results from other similar schools we again find that they are below the average. The school management has already recognised this and includes the raising of the number of pupils gaining the higher levels at both key stages as a priority. There is no appreciable difference between the results of girls and boys at Key Stage 2.

81. Inspection findings are that in both key stages the pupils' attainment in mathematics is above the national expectation. This is an improvement in Key Stage 1 and is consistent with the judgement for Key Stage 2 from the last inspection report. The expected rise in results this year can, in part, be attributed to the effective introduction of the Number Strategy, which is having a positive impact on pupils' skills in number and mental mathematics.

82. In both key stages, pupils conduct mathematical investigations and carry out practical work with good levels of understanding of the processes. Most pupils complete both written and mental calculations accurately. Throughout the school pupils use and can explain a range of strategies when they calculate.

83. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils understand the mathematics they are undertaking and many exercise initiative when developing strategies of their own to solve problems. The pupils have a good understanding of number systems and they recognise the inverse of calculations for example $2 \times 4 = 4 \times 2$. They are able to create and solve simple equations. Pupils are confident in addition and subtraction up to 20 with many being able to go beyond this point. They have a good knowledge of mathematical vocabulary, for example in the measurement of length they can distinguish between "narrow" and "thin". They understand estimation and know why it is important and can competently double and halve numbers accurately. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of place value to 100,000 and work quickly and accurately when

completing multiplication and division calculations. Many pupils are adept at mental calculations and confidently add and subtract fractions, decimals and percentages. At times, standards are high. Pupils are also able to apply their knowledge and skills to practical everyday problems because of their good mathematical vocabulary – an area of the curriculum where the quality of teaching is particularly effective.

84. Teaching is good at both key stages and in over one third of lessons it was very good or excellent. Most of the very good or excellent teaching occurred in Year 5 where mathematics teaching was particularly strong. No unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics was observed during the inspection. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. This, combined with a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils, enables them to produce interesting and appropriate activities, and motivates pupils to learn well. The teachers encourage pupils to use and explain their own methods particularly when calculating mentally. Skilled questioning, observing and listening enables teachers to find out what pupils know. Support staff, when available, are well briefed and add appropriately to the quality of teaching.

85. In most lessons, pupils respond enthusiastically to the good classroom management. Teachers' expectations of what the pupils can produce are usually appropriate, although sometimes in lower Key Stage 2 the pace slows. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils, interact with them sensitively and encourage them effectively to make progress. This helps pupils to develop the confidence to know that their ideas and answers are valued, to behave well and in most cases work purposefully. In the very best lessons the teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their own mathematical strategies and make decisions and choices. In a lesson in Year 5 for example, following a mental/oral session in which pupils doubled and halved numbers, including fractions and decimals, pupils explored multiplication and division. The teacher used pupils' ideas skilfully to further develop their understanding of fraction and decimal equivalent. Pupils of all abilities were enabled to make very good progress in their mathematical skills but also in speaking and listening as they explained their answers and reasoning.

86. Good attention is given to the teaching of numeracy and the teachers have been particularly successful in developing the pupils' skills in mental calculations. They ensure that they teach the pupils specific strategies for calculating and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their own methods. No opportunities for pupils to use calculators were seen during the inspection.

87. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and the subject is well planned by teachers using an agreed format. There are effective strategies for monitoring pupils' progress and effective methods of accurately identifying areas of weakness in pupils' understanding are being developed in Year 6. These are not yet sufficiently developed throughout the school. Work is marked regularly, but the marking does not always indicate how pupils can improve their work. Corrections of errors are not consistently completed. Homework is used appropriately to support the raising of standards in mathematics. The teachers have worked hard to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. Monitoring of the quality of teaching is regularly undertaken and this, along with an examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning, is helping to raise standards across the school. The school is expected to achieve its target in mathematics agreed with the local education authority.

SCIENCE

88. From 1996 to 1998, the results achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in the school were noticeably better than those found nationally and they improved at a rate more rapid than in most other schools. However, in 1999 the results dropped dramatically to in line with the national average and well below the average found in similar schools. This reflected the disruption caused by the Year 6 pupils having three different teachers during the year. Another factor was that a new scheme of work was being adopted, and assessment and recording of pupils' progress had not been developed. As a result coverage of the science curriculum was not as effective as it could have been and pupils did not achieve as well as they should have done. The current Year 6 pupils have benefited from a settled year and overall their achievement is appropriate and comfortably above expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils comfortably achieve national expectations. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

89. Scrutiny of Year 6 pupils' work indicates that much of the work they covered in lessons earlier in the year was too simple and limited their achievements. This reflected the teacher's uncertainty of what was required for this age group, which was new to her. However, her detailed assessments and analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses has resulted in challenging, well focused and effective remedial teaching and revision and this has led to dramatic improvements in their learning. A large majority of pupils now have good knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and their properties and of physical processes, such as electricity. They can, for example, classify living things into groups using characteristics, such as, vertebrate and invertebrate, describe food chains using terms, such as, predator and prey and explain how muscles work. When discussing materials they can explain how mixtures can be separated using filtration and the components of solutions can be retrieved using evaporation and condensation. Terms, such as, opaque, transparent and translucent are understood well and they know that heating materials often leads to changes that cannot be reversed. Pupils understand the concept of balanced forces and can give examples, such as, gravity being balanced by up-thrust when a balloon is stationary in the air. They use appropriate units, "Newtons", when measuring the strength of forces. As well as having good knowledge and understanding, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are confident in carrying out scientific investigations and can devise their own fair tests, for example to find out which of several material produces the most friction.

90. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate understanding of how scientists find things out. They record their observations accurately and have, for example followed controlled experiments to find out what plants need to survive and how sounds become fainter the further you are away from their source. When exploring the forces exerted by elastic bands, they clearly understood the need to change only one variable if their test was to be fair. They have good understanding of electricity and can, for example, explain what could lead to a bulb not lighting in a circuit. Their understanding of living things and materials is comfortably in line with expectations.

91. The school has adopted a detailed scheme of work which informs teachers' planning of science and, with the exception referred to above, leads to satisfactory progression in pupils' learning as they move through each key stage. All of the lessons that were seen benefited from being effectively planned. Teachers clearly identified what children were to learn and how this learning would be achieved. Lessons were therefore well prepared and teachers used resources effectively. This was the case, for example, in a good lesson in Year 2. The teacher provided a range of carefully chosen household materials that enabled the pupils to explore and successfully understand about stretching and elasticity. Skilful questioning and targeted support of pupils who needed extra help or

greater challenge enabled all to make good progress. A very good lesson in Year 1, on where different small creatures live, had all of these characteristics and the teacher's high expectations, which were reflected in her consistent use of scientific terminology, extended pupils' learning well. In this class, the teacher demonstrated skilful management of pupils who had special educational needs related to behaviour. She successfully captured theirs and other pupils' interest and enthusiasm and enabled them to make good progress. In both infant classes, the teachers made good use of adult helpers who were provided with clear guidance and focused tasks that enabled them to support pupils' learning well. Teaching in Key Stage 1 was good.

92. Overall, pupils continue to make appropriate progress in Key Stage 2 in response to teaching that is consistently satisfactory and sometimes good. In Year 3, pupils learning about magnetism were provided with a wide range of magnets and were encouraged to find out for themselves as many properties about them as they could. The teacher carefully refined their observations and introduced key words, such as attraction and repulsion, when appropriate. Many were amazed and excited by what they were finding out and by the end of the lesson the pupils had developed a much more secure understanding of magnets. However, the progress they made was reduced because of the need to divide the class into two, so that there would be sufficient magnets for the practical work. One half practised their drawing skills, while the other worked with the teacher on science. The effect of this was to dilute the effectiveness of the teacher's input into both the science and the art lesson. After a rather long and insufficiently focused introduction, the Year 4 teacher made good use of practical demonstrations, involving pupils, to develop their understanding of how keys can be used to aid identification of living things. By the end of the lesson, pupils had a secure understanding of simple classification and decision trees. Year 6 pupils continued to make good progress in consolidating and extending their knowledge and understanding across the different aspects of science through the well planned and prepared "University Challenge" quiz. This lesson benefited from a lively pace and the challenging questions devised by the teacher. She made good use of pupils' errors to clarify and refine their learning. The format of the session also provided a good opportunity to develop pupils' social skills.

93. A common weakness in the teaching of science is marking. Although comments are often made on pupils' work, teachers do not consistently follow them up and few of the pupils' books show any improvements in the areas that teachers have identified as needing attention in their comments.

94. In all lessons, pupils behave sensibly and usually well. They are often very interested in what they are doing, eagerly answer questions often in considerable detail and sustain tasks well without the teacher's direct supervision. This was the case, for example, in Year 2 when a group of pupils were creating a data file on materials on the computer.

95. An aspect of science teaching that needs to improve is assessment and record keeping. This is done inconsistently across the school. There is no agreed system of assessment or format for recording what teachers have found out about pupils' learning. Teachers, therefore, tend to follow the scheme of work in their planning and do not take sufficient account of what pupils know to fine tune what they will teach. When assessments are used, as in Year 6, the progress that pupils make is accelerated. Although there are just sufficient resources for science overall, on occasion, as referred to above, pressure on equipment and materials can lead to lessons being modified and their impact being reduced.

ART

96. Attainment in art varies considerably from class to class and across the key stages and standards remain very much as reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in both key stages are attaining in line with the national expectation with some pupils demonstrating levels of skill that are well above that normally expected. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school.

97. Limited opportunities existed to see lessons during the inspection. However, examination of work around the school shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 have opportunities to develop skills in a good range of artistic areas, including painting, printing and collage work. Much of the work is linked to themes being studied in other subjects, such as a study of spring in which pupils used a variety of torn and cut materials to create landscapes. Skills are further developed when, after studying a variety of mini-beasts, children create large-scale representations of ladybirds and bees, using carefully cut paper and cellophane. Children explore the use of other materials such as oil pastels and many show good skills in colour mixing. Computer art is beginning to be developed. No examples of pupils studying the work of famous artists were on display. Much work seen gives useful experience but lacks depth.

98. Much, but by no means all, of pupils' art experience in Key Stage 2 is closely linked to the needs of other subjects. For example, pupils draw science diagrams carefully and illustrate history topics using appropriate drawing and colouring techniques. Interviews with children reveal that they have a satisfactory knowledge of the works of several artists from various eras. In addition to studying painting, pupils research the lives of some artists and could relate important details of their lives, a good link with English. Skills are appropriately developed at this age and the pupils use a good range of materials. These include paint where pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of colour mixing, the use of chalks and pastels and of charcoal. Use of the computer to create pictures and new characters for "Mr Men" books is becoming part of pupils' art experience. More modern art forms such as "Pop Art" are explored with good effect in Year 5. Less emphasis is placed on sculpture and other three-dimensional work although pupils in Year 4 show good levels of skill in creating thumb and coil pots. Pupils use sketch books in Key Stage 2 but the introduction of these has not led to the close observation of visual information or detailed experiments with tools and materials that might be expected.

99. It was only possible to see two art lessons during the inspection. The quality of teaching in both was at least satisfactory. In the Year 4 lesson using clay, the teacher was knowledgeable and provided clear instructions on the skills pupils were to use and develop. This resulted in pupils having a clear understanding of what they were to do and led to good quality results being achieved. Demonstration was used well in this lesson. Through good quality questioning pupils were challenged to make their own decisions, which they did with interest and no little skill.

100. The co-ordinator for art is knowledgeable and well organised. Her monitoring and evaluation of standards lacks rigour because it is informal. This is beginning to change and progress has already been made on the development of a list of skills to be taught to ensure the progressive development of learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. Very limited opportunities existed to see lessons in design and technology but teachers' planning, interviews with pupils and an examination of pupils' work indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2. This is a similar judgement to that made following the last inspection.

102. Pupils' range of experience in design and technology varies from class to class and it is apparent that there are some gaps in their knowledge and understanding. For example, older pupils had little memory of working with textiles or weaving and had no knowledge of pneumatics. There was, however, evidence of pupils using construction kits effectively and experiencing food technology through the designing and making of pizzas helped by a visiting expert.

103. In Key Stage 1, pupils begin to understand the designing process and carry out experiments into the suitability of different handles and fastenings. They are able to both write about and illustrate their ideas and demonstrate good skills in cutting and sewing. Most children at this age are able to evaluate their work and suggest areas it may be improved. In the only design and technology lesson observed, pupils explored hinges and were helped to discover a wide variety of types round the classroom. Children worked very well together and, following a very well thought out series of tasks, were able to discuss what they had done and the merits of their work. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 2. However photographic evidence and actual models made by pupils indicate that they have acquired appropriate skills and understanding to construct models. A good example of this was well made collection boxes designed to encourage pupils to give to charity. Work on display indicates that pupils had a clear understanding of evaluating designs and models while drawing on skills learned in other curriculum areas. These include measuring skills from mathematics, science skills in constructing electrical circuits and artistic skills used in improving the finish of the models. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an appropriate understanding of the variety of differing materials available, the most appropriate use for these and how they can be joined in a variety of ways. This knowledge and understanding was combined effectively when pupils were asked to design and make a structure to support a given weight. This helped them to understand strong and stable structures.

104 Pupils appear to enjoy design and technology – they certainly did in the one lesson seen where they found the tasks both interesting and challenging. In this lesson they listened carefully to instructions and concentrated well demonstrating good skills in cutting and fixing using a variety of methods. There is a policy for the subject but this is in need of review. The scheme of work that guides teachers' planning has been recently revised. Teaching staff have received appropriate training and confidence in the teaching of design and technology is good. The co-ordinator has had opportunities to monitor pupils' progress through direct observation of the designing and making process and also examining colleagues' planning. Resources are adequate to deliver the curriculum and are appropriately organised and well looked after by staff and pupils alike. Currently no use of information technology is used in connection with the control of models.

GEOGRAPHY

105. The quality of pupils' learning and progress are unsatisfactory by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2. This judgement is based on pupil interviews, the quality and depth of work seen in pupils' books and on teachers' planning. This evidence indicates that while geography is taught there is a lack of depth and rigour to the work and pupils' knowledge of different areas of the world, continents, countries and oceans is limited. In the last inspection, no judgement was made on the quality of work seen.

106. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the seasons and the weather and look at appropriate clothing showing a clear link with science and their study of water proof and lightweight materials. In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, the teacher had planned and organised the lesson well, and provided interesting and challenging material and ideas for the pupils. Good use was made of video materials to illustrate the lesson. Pupils extended their vocabulary well and learned several new words to describe the weather. By the end of the lesson, pupils were able to suggest a variety of jobs that were directly affected by the weather, demonstrating a good level of understanding. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have become familiar with aspects of the local area and can use simple maps appropriately. They understand scale and co-ordinates, skills and knowledge gained from mathematics. Science knowledge contributes significantly to a study of the hydrological cycle and pupils develop a good understanding of terms such as evaporation and condensation. Teachers use good questioning techniques in these lessons, which help to develop a clear understanding of the topic. Studies of other parts of the world are made such as those of St Lucia and Kenya, but these studies lack rigour and do not lead to pupils developing a sufficient depth of insight into the lives of other peoples.

107. Questioning of pupils indicates that their knowledge of maps and mapping is limited and few know common symbols used in map work keys, although pupils did understand scales. Aerial maps are not used extensively to explore and illustrate landscape features. Pupils' understanding of the development of settlements is also limited.

108. Progress since the last inspection has been made. The school now uses a nearby contrasting location in order to compare the two areas and draw conclusions about similarities and differences. The school's policy has also been reviewed. However, the co-ordinator has no opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching although teachers' planning is examined. Formal monitoring of standards of work is not currently undertaken. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum and educational visits add to the quality of what is taught.

HISTORY

109. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, but two were observed in Key Stage 2. To supplement observations, past work was considered, planning examined and discussions with pupils were held. Overall, the standards of their work and the knowledge they demonstrate is what is expected for the age group concerned. Comparisons with the previous inspection indicate that standards of historical knowledge may have fallen. However, pupils in Year 6 use appropriate vocabulary and understanding to confidently describe chronology and could assign sensible dates to historical events. Although pupils in Year 6 had limited knowledge of local history, pupils in Year 5 had a considerable depth of knowledge in this area and had conducted surveys on occupations, family size and forenames using census data from the 1800s. Good use of computer technology is used to analyse this material. A good range of history topics has been studied and pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of historical periods as varied as the "Vikings" and "Britain since the 1930s". In depth studies of Tudor times have been undertaken and pupils could compare life styles of rich and poor, town and country dwellers as well as the great explorers. Studies of Ancient Greece and Egypt enable pupils to clarify their understanding of the passage of time and how information was amassed so that we could study ancient civilisations today. Work on the "Vikings" and the "Tudors" enables pupils to empathise with the life styles of people alive at the time.

110. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good overall. The pupils were well managed, made in one case very good progress and behaved very well. The use of artefacts in lessons promotes pupils' interest and in another lesson skilful questioning checked that pupils had understood the lesson's objectives relating to the analysis of census data. At Key Stage 2, an analysis of past work indicates a good contribution to literacy as pupils are involved in a variety of forms of writing, including narrative and the writing of letters. The subject also makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as they reflect, for example, on the lives of the rich and poor in Victorian times. Some contribution is made to pupils' mathematical understanding through the development of chronology.

111. A number of factors make a satisfactory and sometimes good contribution to attainment in history. There is a useful scheme of work that ensures the coverage of the curriculum and satisfactory progress by pupils. Much guidance comes from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority and has been personalised to meet the specific needs of the school. The policy document, providing advice to teachers is, however, in need of updating. The co-ordinator has a sound knowledge of provision throughout the school but as yet no rigorous monitoring of standards or teaching takes place. Resources are satisfactory and have improved since the last OFSTED inspection. Visits to places of historical interest such as Ribchester and a toy museum enrich the curriculum. A weakness is the limited amount of curriculum time devoted to the teaching of history.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Pupils achieve standards in information technology (IT) that are broadly in line with what pupils should achieve by the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. There have been clear improvements since the last inspection when major weaknesses in pupils' learning made this core skill a key issue for improvement. There is still scope for further improvement as pupils' skills in using computers for control and monitoring of events, such as changes in temperature over time, are not yet being sufficiently developed and provision for these strands does not meet statutory requirements. There are plans to address these weaknesses.

113. By Year 6, pupils have appropriate skills in word processing. They choose appropriate fonts, change their appearance for different purposes, incorporate pictures and format their work effectively. The class book of pupils' 'kennings' shows these skills well. They have a good understanding of how computers are used to store, retrieve, sort and search information and understand terms such as file, record and field. In a lesson, they were observed confidently searching a file using three fields. Similarly, they can make effective use of large collections of information on CD ROMs, searching and printing out the information they need. Although standards in these aspects are in line with expectations, less progress has been made than the teacher planned because the computer systems have been very unreliable and this has reduced the opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their skills. Although Year 6 pupils are not yet using computers for control, they have developed insights into this strand of IT through their work in designing and making collecting boxes that triggered events such as bulbs lighting or buzzers sounding when contributions were made.

114. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 use a range of tools in paint programs well. Their pictures of themselves as adults doing their chosen job show skilful use of different brushes, the fill tool and careful selection of fonts to label their work. Pupils also show an understanding of how the Internet can be used to find information to support their topics, such as food. During a science lesson, pupils confidently entered the properties of

different materials into a data file and demonstrated good understanding of using computers to store and retrieve information.

115. Only three discrete IT lessons were seen being taught and one of these was in the reception class and is referred to under the section on children under five. All the lessons were well taught by confident teachers who had prepared well and focused their explanations and questioning closely on what they wanted the pupils to learn. In Year 1, the teacher, during her introduction, effectively consolidated earlier learning by reviewing how icons are used to make selections. She then carefully built on this, using pupils themselves to carefully demonstrate how to use the fill tool when 'painting' on the computer. Her explanations were clear and her questioning across the class ensured that she knew that all understood what she wanted them to learn. In Year 6, the teacher carefully questioned pupils about what they had learned about using data files when they were in a lower Key Stage 2 class. Their answers were used effectively to reinforce and extend their understanding and skills in modifying information and to develop their use of terms, such as record and field. The strategy, adopted by the school, of introducing new skills in short IT lessons and then giving pupils time to practise them in real contexts across the curriculum, works well. In Year 1, and in other classes, pupils are supported in their subsequent work by information cards and well structured work cards that developed skills steadily.

116. The commercial scheme used by the school provides structure for the development of skills and accessible and relevant tasks for the pupils to undertake. Teachers mainly use this appropriately and adapt the scheme so that opportunities to use IT in other subjects can be developed. Examples include Year 5's pictures of "Mr Men" characters. These showed skilful use of brushes and other tools and carefully chosen fonts. In Year 1, pupils had collected data on types of houses and materials around school and used the computer to generate graphs to present their findings.

117. Currently, there is no formal approach to assessing and recording pupils' progress in IT. This needs to be developed in order to ensure that work is always set at an appropriate level, for example, the skills in using IT to present information on shadow lengths in Year 5 were similar to the data handling work undertaken much earlier in the school. The co-ordinator will need to carefully monitor planning in order to ensure there is progression in learning across the school.

118. The co-ordinator has a well thought out plan to develop IT through the National Grid for Learning initiative. This builds effectively on the current provision and should help to develop further the use of IT in all classes and reduce the problems caused by the unreliability of mainly older machines. Pressure on the co-ordinator's time to maintain IT resources is considerable and will increase as resources improve. At present, she has no release time for this vital task.

MUSIC

119. By the end of both key stages, standards overall are broadly in line with national expectations. The school has maintained the standards seen in the last inspection. Music is a developing strength, with teachers gaining in confidence. More pupils are now involved in playing instruments and they have opportunities to perform regularly. In assemblies and hymn practice, singing is satisfactory. Words are memorised and enunciated well, with younger pupils joining in the actions or the echo. Pupils listen attentively to well-chosen recorded music played as they enter the hall.

120. A carefully planned lesson with appropriately matched activities enables younger pupils in Key Stage 2 to follow rhythms successfully. They concentrate hard when playing challenging clapping games, learning to practise first before extending their learning to working with a partner and then into a round. Throughout the lesson, the teacher helps the pupils to make progress by refining their ability to sustain rhythms. Older pupils attain good standards when listening to and appraising persuasive pieces of music linked to their work in literacy. They are able to evaluate each piece of music and can express their personal views, identifying the sounds and elements for mood or effect. Their previous learning enables them to use a musical vocabulary such as melody, tempo, dynamics, pitch and timbre. Pupils are highly motivated by the challenging and very well planned activity. The purposeful and enthusiastic teaching encourages all to succeed, whilst the very good relationships between teacher and pupils impact strongly and positively on the learning and the progress that pupils make. Pupils with special educational needs take full part in the lesson; the teacher ensures that all pupils know exactly what is expected.

121. Satisfactory teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 help pupils to attain the standard expected by the time they are seven. Pupils are able to echo a rhythm clapped by the teacher. They progress to clapping and singing at the same time and succeed in holding the tune whilst keeping a regular beat. Simple compositions using chime bars enable some pupils to achieve success by making a sound pattern, but others are too easily distracted and lose concentration.

122. The school choir practises regularly, but support for it fluctuates greatly. However, the eleven girls who attended during the inspection sang enthusiastically, with good technical control. They enjoy their singing and strive to improve.

123. Pupils throughout the school are not given opportunities to develop and apply their information technology capability in their study of music, and composing is at an early stage of development. Resources to support the music curriculum are adequate, but more tuned percussion and instruments from other cultures would benefit the pupils' learning. A comprehensive and thorough policy and the 'Music in Action' scheme help to support teachers' planning. However, as yet, there is no formal assessment to gauge how well pupils are progressing within the breadth of the National Curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. Overall, standards in physical education (PE) are comfortably in line with expectations at both key stages and in individual lessons and extra curricular clubs many pupils achieve above what is expected for their age.

125. By Year 6, pupils have good control when balancing and integrate their movements effectively into gymnastic sequences. They have also developed a wide range of games skills to a satisfactory standard. This reflects the progressive development of skills over the key stage and the opportunities they have to "taste" an impressive variety of games in their final year. These include netball, soccer, rugby, hockey, rounders, cricket and tennis. Year 6 pupils, both boys and girls, in an extra curricular football club showed good skills in striking, passing and controlling a ball. In Year 5, pupils swim each week and, by the time they enter Year 6, almost all can swim 25 metres and have achieved the water safety requirements. Throughout the key stage, pupils enjoy a wide curriculum that enables them to develop skills in dance and athletics as well as games and gymnastics. Year 6 pupils

are able to experience adventurous activities, such as orienteering and abseiling when they attend an outdoor pursuits centre.

126. Many pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, when country dancing, demonstrate good awareness of rhythm, count and execute dance steps carefully and co-ordinate well with others in their sets. Earlier in the key stage, Year 1 pupils have good skills in gymnastics. They use space well, understand technical terms used in gymnastics, such as “points”, and show good control when balancing. Even at this young age, pupils have a clear understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and of the need to warm up and warm down during PE sessions.

127. In all lessons, pupils behave well, co-operate effectively in group tasks and respond positively and sensibly when their work is evaluated and when they are evaluating the efforts of others. This reflects the teachers’ positive relationships and management of pupils’ behaviour.

128. Overall, the teaching of PE is good. Teachers plan lessons with clear objectives for what they want pupils to learn. They are well prepared and confident in their approach. Lessons have a good pace and pupils gain a good understanding of what is expected of them as a result of the teachers’ clear explanations and well focused questions. In the best lessons, teachers have good personal skills and understanding and are able to offer challenges to pupils that enhance the progress they make. This was the case in a very good Year 5 gymnastics lesson, when the teacher used a simple, but effective, strategy to skilfully encourage a pupil to extend his stretched balance and achieve a much more polished shape. In Year 1, the teacher was also seen using effective strategies that noticeably improved pupils’ abilities to balance and stretch. In both these lessons the teachers’ high expectations were reflected in their consistent use of technical terms when explaining and questioning pupils. A very lively pace was maintained throughout a well organised and structured Year 3 games lesson, which ensured that pupils exercised thoroughly as they improved their techniques in controlling and moving with a ball. A positive feature of almost all of the lessons seen was the emphasis that teachers placed on evaluation of pupils’ performance. This enabled pupils to identify what needed to be done to make improvements and supported the good progress made in most lessons.

129. Teaching of PE is informed by, and benefits from a detailed scheme of work, and from access to a large hall and a generous sized school field. There are good resources to support learning across all aspects of the subject. A good range of mixed gender, extra curricular clubs and opportunities to enter into competitive events enhances the learning opportunities of many pupils in Key Stage 2.