

INSPECTION REPORT

Broad Oak Primary School

Penwortham, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119337

Headteacher: Mr I M Kirkland

Reporting inspector: Steve Bywater
18463

Dates of inspection: 5th - 8th February 2001

Inspection number: 190915

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Pope Lane
Penwortham
Preston
Lancashire

Postcode: PR1 9DE

Telephone number: 01772 749511

Fax number: 01722 751755

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Breakell

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Steve Bywater 18463	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Colin Herbert 09652	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (attitudes and behaviour) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Tess Galvin 21020	Team inspector	English Religious education Art Music Foundation Stage	
Derek Pattinson 19120	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd
5, Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE4 6QZ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6S

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?	10
The school's results and pupils' 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?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Penwortham Broad Oak Primary School is an average sized primary school with 221 pupils on roll made up of 97 boys and 124 girls aged between 4 and 11 years. The school is about the same size as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The school is popular and over-subscribed. The proportion of pupils registered for free school meals is 20 per cent, which is broadly in line with the national average and similar to the proportion of pupils on the free school meals register during the previous inspection. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority groups and no pupils speak English as an additional language. The general attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average and includes the full range. Many of the children in the Foundation Stage have attended a nursery or playgroup. They enter the reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The school has 60 pupils on its register of special educational needs, 27 per cent, and this is above average. Eighteen pupils on the special educational needs register receive additional support from outside agencies and have individual education plans. Six pupils have statements of special education need. Most of the pupils on the special educational needs register have a moderate learning difficulty, although the difficulties are wide ranging. In 1998, the school was asked by the Department for Education and Employment to apply for Beacon Status in recognition of its achievements in raising standards and improvements in the context of similar schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good and some excellent features. Its strengths lie in the excellent leadership of the headteacher, high quality teaching, which ensures pupils are taught well the basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and an exciting curriculum, which promotes pupils' personal, moral, social and cultural development very well. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are high when compared with similar schools. Parents are justifiably proud of the education their children receive at Penwortham Broad Oak Primary School. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- When compared with similar schools, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are impressive in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good and pupils make good progress.
- A broad, balanced and relevant curriculum is provided. Provision for pupils' moral, social, personal and cultural development is very good. Extra-curricular activities are excellent.
- The headteacher, with the support of staff, governors, parents and pupils, creates an excellent ethos that promotes high standards.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to learning. Relationships within school and with parents and the community are very good. Pupils behave very well.
- The school analyses pupils' achievements astutely and uses the information to improve their standards. The school shows excellent care for pupils.

What could be improved

- The provision for pupils in the reception class.
- The consistency of teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work.

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 November 1996 the school has improved effectively and dealt with the issues raised. A new headteacher was appointed and this was the foundation to the many following improvements. The staff developed effective discipline procedures so that behaviour of pupils in all classes is mostly very good and this enables pupils to take full advantage of the learning opportunities. Teaching has improved significantly as the school reviewed teaching methods so as to ensure the strategies and practices. This results in the effective development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Short-term lesson planning is now very good and enables teachers to use the daily assessment of pupils' attainments when organising future work. Teachers have also improved their skills to ensure that more focused exploration and investigation take place, particularly in mathematics and design and technology. More needs to be done in science. The only area that has not developed sufficiently is the provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	C	A	A*
Mathematics	B	C	C	A
Science	B	D	C	B

Key	
Very high performance (being in highest 5% nationally)	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, pupils' standards were well above the national average in English and standards were close to the national average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools standards were very high in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science.

The full range of inspection evidence shows that at the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are in line with national expectations and are above national expectations in science. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above national expectations for pupils aged 11 years. In information and communication technology, pupils reach the nationally expected level by the ages of 7 and 11 years. In art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. There are many examples of good work in most subjects. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the local guidelines.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are eager to learn and try hard to do their best. They respond enthusiastically in lessons and concentrate well. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and breaktimes is very good. Pupils are sensible, courteous and polite and they respect their teachers and one another.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils respond well to opportunities that they are given to take on responsibilities. The school council is a positive development. Relationships within school are very good. The school has an atmosphere of mutual respect where adults and pupils alike trust each other, can express their views confidentially, are positive and take others' views seriously.
Attendance	Attendance is good and most pupils arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
43 lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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.

Teaching is good overall and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Of the 43 lessons seen, 30 per cent were satisfactory, 44 per cent were good and 26 per cent were very good. The quality of teaching for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The staff work together as a team, but their understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how young children learn through practical activities are not secure. However, literacy and numeracy work are taught competently and as a result many children use these skills well. Teachers could improve the teaching of basic skills by devising interesting and more varied ways of teaching. Sometimes staff provide too many activities and as a result they find it difficult to monitor, check and extend children's learning effectively.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, the teaching is good. In most lessons, the good teaching is characterised by the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the subject, good levels of challenge resulting from high expectations, purposeful questioning and a good choice and use of resources. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and they control them well. Assessment is used consistently to inform future planning to enable teachers to build effectively on previous learning. However, marking is not used as well as it could be to pick up on untidy work. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. Strengths in English include the way that teachers give good explanations to pupils and clear instructions for the tasks that they ask pupils to do. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn in the lessons and as a result pupils are clearly focused and concentrate well. Impressive mental mathematics sessions are increasing pupils' speed and their understanding of strategies, which are then applied to solve problems. Review sessions at the end of literacy and numeracy lessons are consistently used well to consolidate learning and to provide a firm platform on which further to develop understanding. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good in Key Stages 1 and 2 where the school provides a broad range of work that is relevant to pupils and fully meets statutory requirements. Extra-curricular provision is excellent. It is satisfactory in the reception class, but children have few opportunities to investigate the world around them and to talk about their ideas and experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers match pupils' work carefully to meet their individual needs. However, some individual education programmes are not detailed enough.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good moral, social and cultural development, and good spiritual development. Staff provide very good role models. Pupils are taught right from wrong, the promotion of citizenship and the valuing of others' strengths. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own culture through art, dance and music. Their awareness of other faiths and cultures is also developed very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent procedures are in place for child protection and health and safety matters. The results of tests and assessments are used astutely to prepare projected targets for the school and for individuals.

The school has very good relationships with parents. Most parents have a positive view of the school and some provide valuable help in class. The parent teacher association works extremely hard to raise funds and contributes to additional resources. The information provided by the school to parents is very good, especially through reports, meetings and surveys. The school involves parents well in the assessment process for pupils with special educational needs and in setting targets for all pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher is an excellent leader and he is supported well by the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators. The staff share a sense of common purpose and are a well co-ordinated team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively and takes an active role in helping to shape the direction of the school through strategic planning. They are fully committed to and supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of performance is very good. There is a rigorous analysis of standards, frequent checking of the progress towards meeting targets in the school improvement plan and regular observations of teaching. The school responds immediately in dealing with any perceived weaknesses and has recognised that the weaker provision for pupils in the reception class needs to be dealt with.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There is a clear link between development planning and finance. Priorities are entirely relevant to school. Best value principles are clearly understood and are at the heart of the financial planning process. The school provides good value for money.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally good. Non-teaching staff are of high quality and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

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 school and they make good progress. • The teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. • The amount of work pupils do at home. • The amount of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents would like to be better informed about how their child is getting on.

This table also takes account of the views of 11 parents attending a meeting held with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and those expressed in 31 returned questionnaires. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents and from all available evidence finds parents are well informed about pupils' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children enter the reception class with average skills in early reading and mathematical development. This is confirmed by the school's initial assessments that it undertakes with these young children. Their achievement is satisfactory across the range of their work and they are in line with the early learning goals¹ in all the areas of their work. This is because in the main teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. The achievement of higher-attaining children is good in number work in mathematical development. However, many children are not achieving as well as they should. This is because teachers do not always provide work that is meeting their needs. It is sometimes not sufficiently practical, stimulating, varied or challenging.
2. In English, the school's results in the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds showed that standards in reading were below the national average and in writing they were in line with the national average. Standards were average in reading and above average in writing when compared with similar schools. In the 2000 national test in mathematics, standards were in line with the national average, but compared favourably with similar schools and were above average. In science, the 2000 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected level was better than the national average and also indicated that more pupils than nationally expected reached the higher Level 3.
3. Standards in English for 11-year-olds have risen at a faster rate than the national trend since the previous inspection. The school's results in the national tests for 2000 showed that standards were high when compared with schools nationally and very high when compared with similar schools. The achievement of most pupils was high when it was compared with the standards they had achieved at the age of seven. In mathematics, the proportion of 11-year-olds achieving the expected level in 2000 was well above the national average, but the proportion of higher-attainers achieving the higher level was disappointing and well below the national average. A close scrutiny of the results showed that six pupils missed the achievement of the higher level by one or two points. When compared with similar schools, the standards in mathematics were well above average. Whilst the 2000 test results in science indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in science was well above the national average, fewer pupils than nationally expected reached the higher Level 5. Since 1997, the school has maintained high standards when compared with similar schools and there has been a steady increase in the proportion of 11-year-olds reaching the standards expected in national tests. Standards will improve further if more of the higher-attaining pupils achieve the higher level in mathematics and science. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys in English, mathematics and science.
4. The full range of inspection evidence shows that standards in speaking and listening skills are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Most pupils listen very carefully and this contributes positively to the good rate of learning in all aspects of English. In reading, pupils' achievement is good and by the age of seven almost all pupils reach at least average standards. By the age of 11 standards in reading are above average. Higher-attaining pupils discuss what they read, showing that they understand it

¹ Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

very well. Average-attaining pupils read confidently and talk enthusiastically about different authors. Lower-attaining pupils read less confidently and relate the reading to their own interests and experiences. Pupils of all abilities develop their reading well in their work in other subjects. In Year 2, writing is above average and this shows good achievement by the majority of pupils. Average and higher-attaining pupils spell words accurately and use punctuation such as full stops and capital letters well. Pupils are beginning to join their writing in Year 2 and joined handwriting becomes more fluent in Years 3 and 4. By the age of 11 most pupils write well in different forms. For example, they write stories, poetry and newspaper reports. Higher- and average-attaining pupils produce handwriting which is joined and fluent and with accurate punctuation. They choose words very carefully for effect. In the upper juniors, the standard of spelling is lower than it should be. The school is aware of this and has taken action to deal with this. In the upper juniors, most pupils do not use pen and the presentation of their work is not as attractive as it should be.

5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading and writing are now better than in the tests. Standards in writing are now above average and reading standards are now average. The improvements are because of the effective teaching in Key Stage 1. The teachers have good subject expertise and high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Year 2 teachers know each pupil's skills in reading and writing and what needs to be taught in order to improve their work. They use this knowledge when setting targets for pupils' writing and marking their work.
6. In mathematics, the standards currently being achieved by pupils in Year 2 are slightly better than the standards reflected in the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds because more pupils are expected to achieve the higher level than the corresponding group last year. The standards currently being achieved by 11-year-olds are also better than those reflected by 11-year-olds in the national tests in 2000 and are now above average. The reason for this is also that more pupils are on track to achieve the higher Level 5 than they did last year. Most pupils make good progress in mathematics. In Year 2, pupils attain the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and in number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling whilst pupils in Year 6 are above average.
7. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils achieve standards in science that are above national levels at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Most pupils make good progress in science as they move through the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in all aspects of science. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is more variable, especially in the development of scientific enquiry. In investigative work, it is mostly good for average attaining pupils and satisfactory for pupils of higher and lower ability. In other areas of the subject, it is mostly good for all pupils.
8. In information and communication technology, the standards achieved by the ages of 7 and 11 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Pupils make good progress in using an expected range of equipment. Throughout the school pupils effectively develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of how to communicate and handle information through information and communication technology. Progress is good because pupils have many opportunities to use computers to apply their skills in other subjects and especially in supporting literacy and numeracy.
9. Pupils apply their literacy skills well across the curriculum. For example, pupils skim and scan documents in their research for history topics and write accounts about other countries in their geography work. Pupils' numeracy skills also develop well in other subjects. For example, they gather information in history, geography and science, record their findings using a variety of graphs and use the information well.

10. In art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education standards are in line with national expectations for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. There are many examples of work exceeding the nationally expected level, particularly in gymnastics and dance. Pupils aged 7 and 11 achieve appropriately in religious education and meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. This is due to the high quality support that these pupils receive and because work is usually well matched to their needs. In the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, 31 per cent of the Year 6 class were on the register of pupils with special educational needs. The school did well with these pupils and 90 per cent of them achieved the level expected for their age in English, 70 per cent achieved the expected level in mathematics and 100 per cent achieved the expected level in science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The attitudes of pupils to school and to their learning are very good. Their behaviour in and around school is also very good. There has been a considerable improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection. Parents also have very positive views about behaviour in school. They consider that this is now a strong feature of school life. They say, and inspectors agree, that their children are courteous, polite and well mannered.
13. In the classroom, the attitude and behaviour of pupils was good or better in 74 per cent of observed lessons and very good or better in 28 per cent of lessons. In particular, the response of pupils in Key Stage1 was even higher, with 91 per cent being judged as good or better and 55 per cent very good or better. These standards have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Similar standards of behaviour were observed in the playground, in the dining hall and around school. In one school assembly, an inspector described the behaviour of pupils as exemplary. There are no exclusions from school.
14. Most children have good attitudes to their learning in the Foundation Stage² and their behaviour is satisfactory. They show satisfactory levels of concentration, initiative and independence for their age. Many children work together as friends, behave well and show that they value what others say by taking turns to speak and listening carefully. This is not the case for a small minority of pupils because the staff have not securely established these routines for all children.
15. Pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to their work. Most are keen to learn, try hard with their work and enjoy succeeding. Most behave sensibly. They respond well to the considerable encouragement they receive and this enhances their self-esteem.
16. All pupils enjoy coming to school and excitedly share their views in class. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were discussing the noise made by flying bombs during the blitz for their narrative writing. They made suggestions such as 'the sound of a million trillion bees in the sky'. Pupils get a 'buzz' from their learning. Additionally, a discussion with pupils from the same year group reflected the confidence that they have developed in school. They were able to discuss their views fluently about a variety of subjects concerning school life such as homework, after-school clubs and the fact that they would like to have the opportunity to start learning French or German in school.

² The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include: knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

17. Relationships between pupils and one another, and between pupils and adults, are very good and sometimes excellent. For example, in a Year 3 music lesson, pupils were very supportive of their teacher who had lost his voice. They were totally attentive and when asked, took the lead in the lesson. Pupils collaborate well in lessons and enjoy working together. For example, in a Year 6 religious education lesson, pupils were working in their groups to access the Internet and seek answers to questions about Buddhism. Pupils play sensibly together in the playground and there was no evidence of any unsociable behaviour, racism or bullying. All pupils are consistently polite and well mannered towards visitors. They hold doors open for all adults and are keen to approach visitors in school and in the playground to ask if their class would be visited during the day. The quality of these relationships has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
18. The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school are very good. For example, every pupil in Year 6 is given a specific responsibility such as house captain or vice captain, membership of the school council, classroom buddy or helping in the school office at lunchtime. Year 6 pupils are also invited to complete a leaving form before they move away from school. One of the very sensible responses to the question 'how could we improve school for children next year?' was 'make toilet doors higher'. The school is now considering this suggestion. Pupils make generous donations to a number of charities including, Red Nose Day and Poppy Appeal. They also donate harvest festival gifts to a mission for the homeless in Preston. All these activities have a very positive impact on pupils' personal development.
19. Attendance rates have improved slightly since the last inspection. They remain good and above the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is in line with the national average. Almost all pupils arrive at school on time. However, a very small number are consistently late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. Overall, the teaching is good. All lessons are at least satisfactory. Seventy per cent of lessons are good or better and 26 per cent are very good. Compared with the previous inspection report, there has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching. This is due to improved practice in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology resulting from in-service training and the national initiatives. It results also from regular and effective monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators and the local education authority adviser. Some teachers who were present in the last inspection are no longer at the school.
21. The quality of teaching for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The staff work together as a team. Their understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how young children learn through practical activities is not secure. This is shown in the methods adults use to gain children's interest and motivate them to learn and in the organisation of the classroom environment. During the inspection the main teaching in one lesson was on speech marks and this was not appropriate for children's stage of development. Formal letter formation, letter sounds, the reading scheme and number work are taught competently and as a result many children use these skills well. Teachers could improve this further by devising more varied and interesting ways of teaching these basic skills.
22. Staff in the Foundation Stage praise and reward the achievements of children and this fosters their confidence and learning. In the main, staff manage children's behaviour suitably. This could be improved by praising their good behaviour more frequently. Staff could also provide additional activities for pupils to take turns and listen carefully. Good teaching was seen in a dance lesson and in mathematical development. These lessons

had good structure and challenge. In a knowledge and understanding lesson, the children had insufficient time to discuss and explore the materials that the adult used in an investigation on waterproof materials. Sometimes staff provide too many activities and as a result they find it difficult to effectively monitor, check and extend children's learning.

23. Throughout the school, teachers generally show high expectations of the pupils' response and they are rewarded by pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Class management is very good and high standards of behaviour are uniformly maintained. Staff have a thorough knowledge about their pupils and relationships are sensitive and caring. Teaching and non-teaching staff are enthusiastic and highly committed to the school, its work and its pupils. They all work very well together, sharing values and a common sense of purpose and thus making significant contributions to the achievements of pupils.
24. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This is used in good lessons to extend pupils' understanding by the use of questioning to encourage pupils to think carefully about their work. In English, mathematics and physical education throughout the school and in science in Key Stage 1, there is good teaching in a high proportion of lessons. Pupils are taught the basic skills and techniques of literacy and numeracy explicitly, systematically and thoroughly. Many pupils ask purposeful questions using a wide vocabulary, and develop a mature understanding of complex issues. This was seen to good effect in a Year 6 history lesson where pupils discussed how people may have felt during the blitz in World War II.
25. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and constructively and include assessment opportunities. All lessons have clear objectives and these are shared with pupils so that the focus is clear and effective teaching takes place. Routines are established early and progressively developed through the school. Teachers consolidate pupils' learning by reviewing what is already known about the topic being discussed, and by the use of constructive feedback to help pupils improve their work. Work is well-matched, both to the requirements of the curriculum and to the needs, interests and abilities of the pupils. In some science lessons however, the investigative work is not sufficiently matched to the higher-attainers' ability.
26. Teachers use effective strategies in collaborative groupwork to involve pupils in learning. Lessons are purposeful and move at a good pace. Teachers use a range of styles including a good balance between information and enquiry. High quality experiences are carefully chosen to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. Pupils have opportunities to solve problems, handle materials and use and enhance their skills and knowledge.
27. Teachers use time and resources very well. Classrooms are well organised with a good range of resources readily accessible. Teachers use information and communication technology appropriately to support all subjects. There are many high quality displays in both key stages that reflect the diverse and rich curriculum. Teachers in most classes work hard to provide a quality of environment that is conducive to, and has a positive effect on, pupils' learning.
28. Teachers usually use their informal day-to-day assessment of pupils' work very well to take pupils' learning forward and this is taken into account well in short-term written plans. Better teaching is characterised by the teachers' ability to review the lesson and move pupils on in their thinking, and by the use of effective interventions to support, coach and challenge pupils as they develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject.
29. Marking is variable across the staff. At its best teachers mark alongside the pupils, using it to encourage pupils to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge as well as to

praise and to motivate. In a small number of classes, teachers are too willing to accept untidy and poorly presented work without comment.

30. Staff set homework regularly. They are consistent in the attention they pay to homework; it is marked and its contribution to the curriculum is recognised in class. Homework is sufficient in quantity, taking into account the amount of work achieved by each pupil during the school day. Parents are well informed and supportive of the policy, which is explained in the home-school agreement. Ninety three per cent of parents are satisfied with the homework pupils are given. Parents were involved in the formation of the policy through consultation.
31. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Separate plans and very good support help ensure that most work is carefully matched to their differing needs. However, the targets on some individual education plans are not sufficiently precise to enable some pupils to make the best possible gains in learning. Work is geared to achieving the targets identified, and teachers regularly evaluate the progress pupils are making towards achieving them. However, targets on individual education plans do not have timescales when they should be achieved. This prevents some pupils from achieving targets in the shortest possible time and slows the progress for them. However, teachers maintain and regularly update records to enable careful tracking of progress.

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

32. The school provides a good curriculum that includes all the subjects required by the National Curriculum.
33. In the main, staff provide a satisfactory variety of activities for children in the Foundation Stage. However, the curriculum teachers provide does not meet children's needs sufficiently. This was the case in the previous inspection. The way the curriculum is taught indicates teachers' insecure understanding of the early learning goals and how young children learn. The work in the classroom and the classroom environment reflect this. Teachers give children insufficient activities to investigate the world around them and to talk about their ideas and experiences. The work is sometimes too difficult for them. The organisation of the classroom, displays, and sometimes the work, do not stimulate children's learning sufficiently or extend the concentration, behaviour and learning of some children enough. As a result children sometimes do not make the progress that they should.
34. In English and mathematics, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding develop soundly in Years 1 and 2. Through the rest of their time in school, their knowledge, skills and understanding develop well in these important subjects of the curriculum. In science, the curriculum enables knowledge, skills and understanding to develop well for most pupils as they move through the school. In other subjects, the curriculum enables pupils to make at least sound progress.
35. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils identified as gifted and talented is good. Work is usually matched carefully to their different needs to enable them to make good progress. Teachers ensure that pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement.
36. There are still some minor weaknesses in the curriculum that require attention. Work in investigative science does not always challenge the higher-attaining pupils sufficiently, especially in Years 3 to 6. In design and technology, the 'design' component is less well represented than the 'making' component and in music there is little evidence of

'composing'. However, the planning of the curriculum is detailed and helps teachers to teach effectively.

37. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers use them consistently and effectively and this is helping to maintain and improve further the high standards in English and mathematics. There are good policies and agreed programmes of work for all subjects, which provide essential guidance for teachers' planning. The school regularly reviews these to help ensure that the curriculum keeps abreast of recent developments. This helps to ensure that all subjects have secure representation within the school's good curriculum.
38. Pupils of different ages support the excellent range of clubs and activities well. These include guitars, infant and junior mathematics, soccer and netball, aerobics, science, drama and choir. The diverse range of clubs appeals to the interests of many pupils. They help to extend the curriculum substantially and enthuse most pupils with a love of their school. A sound range of educational visits and a residential visit to a centre near Ribchester enrich the curriculum still further. Teachers place good emphasis on enabling pupils to handle and learn from materials and resources at first hand, such as in history. By these means, the school provides an interesting and stimulating curriculum for its pupils.
39. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access and opportunity to the curriculum, irrespective of their ability, gender or background. Teachers make every effort, in all lessons and activities that support the curriculum, to ensure that they celebrate and value the contributions of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the life and work of the school. All pupils learn to respect one another and to support each other's learning. This consistent adherence to principles of social and educational inclusion makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.
40. Teachers give very good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education within the curriculum. They promote these areas actively and consistently as part of a carefully structured programme, which is embedded in the life of the school. Successful teaching, in recently introduced lessons, encourages pupils to explore their feelings, reactions and solutions to everyday problems. In assemblies, pupils learn about courage, team building, honesty and the importance of helping others. These approaches make an important contribution to the positive attitudes and values of most pupils. Year 6 pupils all have responsibilities, which they carry out conscientiously. The personal, social and health education programme includes suitable work on the importance of a healthy diet and exercise for maintaining a healthy life style and on the use and misuse of drugs. A 'Health Week' in school helped to raise the profile of some of these issues. A recent and well attended parents' evening helped to raise awareness of the school's approaches to sex education, which is taught in line with the agreed policy of the governing body.
41. The school has developed an excellent partnership with the community. Pupils carry out surveys of local houses and shops and the school has adopted a local pond where pupils work with the local conservationists to protect it. It also makes very good use of a number of local places of interest such as Wigan Pier and Jodrell Bank. Effective links have also been developed with the Construction Industry Training Board. Pupils enjoy all these links, which enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world outside their school. The school has developed a special partnership with British Aerospace plc. Members of staff from the company visit the school on a regular basis and work with pupils on their design and technology projects. Additionally, pupils have the opportunity of displaying their work at an international Royal Air Force show. This link has a very good impact on the understanding that pupils have of design and technology and of possible career opportunities in engineering.

42. Schools in the area work well together. The school has good relationships with pre-school providers, such as the two main feeder nursery schools. A strong and effective partnership has also been developed with local secondary schools. This link ensures that pupils make a very smooth transition into Year 7 and also enables pupils to improve their information and communication technology skills as they use the secondary school's computer suite. The quality of information sent to the schools to which pupils transfer at 11 is very good and teachers liaise with secondary school staff in order to maintain good continuity in pupils' learning. There are very good information and communications technology links with the University of Central Lancashire and also with St Martin's University, which sends students regularly to the school. These links benefit both school and students.
43. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and is better than it was in the previous inspection. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is now very good.
44. Spiritual development remains good and is promoted through subjects, such as religious education, dance and music. In a Year 3 dance lesson, pupils were filled with wonder at the fish in the pictures that the teacher showed them. Year 2 pupils were filled with awe as they began to understand the number patterns in numeracy work. Collective worship is planned carefully and it meets statutory requirements. Junior aged pupils compose and read their own prayers linked to the story told by the teacher. Teachers give a strong emphasis to caring for others and for the environment in the school community and further afield. In an assembly during the inspection, the headteacher told a story about caring for birds in the winter. He linked clearly the life of Saint Francis, the prayer and the hymn to this. In an infant assembly, the teacher used the story to encourage pupils to keep the playground free of litter. Teachers could use a greater variety of approaches and stimuli to gain pupils' interest and motivate them to learn, such as drama, artefacts, pictures or the overhead projector, to improve collective worship.
45. The school promotes moral development strongly through the good example that staff give of care and respect for others. For instance, they listen carefully to pupils' contributions and value what they say. The very good and sometimes exemplary behaviour of most pupils reflects this. The school's programme for personal, social and health education makes a very positive contribution to pupils' moral development. In a Year 4 lesson that the school calls circle time, pupils were given the time to reflect before they spoke about the value of friends and what makes a good friend. Staff use a variety of rewards including praise, certificates and a weekly celebration assembly to reward good behaviour and effort. Classroom and school rules are on display and are reinforced by pupils' work. In Year 1, pupils wrote their good intentions, for example 'I promise not to hurt people's feelings'. These are displayed next to an attractive picture of a mosque that they have produced. These systems lead to the very good behaviour of the majority of pupils and this demonstrates that pupils have a clear sense of the difference between right and wrong. Discussions with pupils show that they know the rules regarding acceptable behaviour at lunchtime, playtimes and in lessons. The moral and social development of children in the Foundation Stage is less well developed. The children's behaviour is satisfactory and this reflects the provision for them and the way that teachers manage their behaviour. The staff could improve this by providing more time to discuss children's actions and activities.
46. The very good relationships between most members of the school community underpin the school's very effective provision for pupils' social and personal development. Teachers encourage pupils to work together in pairs or groups in lessons, such as investigative work in science and drama in subjects such as religious education. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are given specific responsibilities around the school, such as preparing the hall for assembly and working the tape recorder for the music that they play

as pupils enter and leave the hall. Pupils' personal development, sense of citizenship and care for others are fostered through strong links with the local community and raising funds for charity. Pupils in Year 6 have a residential visit and Year 5 hold a 'Summer Enterprise Week'. The buddy system is very successful. Older pupils paired with younger ones help them at playtimes and lunchtimes. The effective school council makes a positive contribution to the personal development of Year 6 pupils.

47. Pupils' own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures are promoted very well through subjects, such as art and history. Pupils study the work of famous artists, such as L.S. Lowry and Matisse and important periods in British history, such as Roman and Tudor times. They study Christianity and other faiths in religious education, for example Islam and Judaism. Teachers provide attractive displays around the school to extend pupils' learning, such as on Buddhism. The school provides regular theme weeks, such as on African art and different faiths. These make a very good contribution to pupils' development. There are regular visits to museums, conservation areas and the theatre linked to pupils' work in history, geography and science. Visitors from the community also enhance the provision; for example, they contribute to pupils' work in religious education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. The school provides excellent care for its pupils. This care is enhanced by the very good knowledge that staff have of their pupils and the high quality of relationships that exist within the whole school community. Parents express very positive comments about the care that their children receive in school. There has been a considerable improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection.
49. Staff in the Foundation Stage are caring and know the children well. They make good use of praise to reward children's achievements and this promotes children's self-esteem and confidence.
50. A number of very effective and comprehensive procedures are in place for both child protection and health and safety, which result in a safe and secure environment for children to learn. Very effective arrangements also exist for first-aid and the recording of accidents. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have also received basic first-aid training and are able to practise their skills in competitions throughout the north-west. Members of the governing body have a good understanding of their responsibilities and they carry out formal annual safety inspections of the school premises.
51. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good overall, but not as effective in the Foundation Stage as elsewhere throughout school. In the reception class, the staff have not established securely for all children the routine of listening to others and taking turns to speak. Sometimes children's learning is interrupted because the teacher spends time dealing with a few children who are restless and whose behaviour is unsatisfactory. In the main, this occurs when children are working in a large group and on these occasions the pace of learning slows down. Throughout the rest of the school, teachers have high expectations for the behaviour of their pupils and they consistently apply rewards and sanctions. There are many opportunities for pupils to receive certificates for such awards as student of the week or for their excellent behaviour and effort. Pupils are involved in agreeing their own standards of behaviour each year through the class rules. This has a positive impact in that pupils have a very good idea of right and wrong and respond in an appropriate way. Additionally, the school uses circle time³ very well to promote moral issues such as 'how to treat a friend' or 'the importance of team work'. The midday assistants are an integral part of the school team and they provide a very effective contribution to school life. The procedures to monitor and

³ [Circle time is an opportunity for pupils to discuss a wide range of personal and general issues.](#)

promote attendance are also very good and the school works in close liaison with local support agencies to investigate and follow up any absences or lapses in punctuality. A very good example of the systems that are in place is that every parent or carer is contacted immediately if a pupil has not arrived at school.

52. The school's arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic performance are very good. However, they are better in English, mathematics and science than for other subjects of the curriculum, although arrangements here are improving. The school carries out a variety of different tests as pupils move through the school.
53. The assessment procedures for children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The school makes an initial assessment of children's achievements on entry to the reception class and uses it effectively to group children for communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. It regularly checks children's achievements in these areas of learning and in information and communication technology. Teachers make satisfactory use of this information to match the work to the needs of most children. A gifted and talented child was identified efficiently in the autumn term and she now works in the Year 1 class so that her needs are met. Assessments in the other areas of learning are not in place.
54. The school groups pupils from the test results to provide the best possible support for them. As well as the national tests and teacher assessments, which pupils receive at 7 and 11, other tests, such as in reading, spelling and number, are given regularly to pupils as they move through the school. These provide evidence to teachers of pupils' attainment. In other subjects, different arrangements are used. For example, portfolios of work, levelled to National Curriculum requirements, help teachers monitor pupils' academic performance in subjects, such as geography, art and history. An annual design and technology project enables teachers to monitor standards in this subject. However, there is room for improvement as some portfolios are being revised, while others are rarely used.
55. The school keeps detailed records of all assessments carried out. Results are analysed thoroughly in order to identify where weaknesses exist. Work is then targeted to help pupils to overcome the weaknesses and to track their progress over time. The analysis also includes differences in the performances of boys and girls, and pupils of different ages and from different backgrounds. There is a rigorous approach to this analysis to help raise attainment, and all pupils benefit. Assessment, therefore, has a positive impact on planning and what pupils do.
56. The use of assessment as a guide to planning in the medium and shorter term is now good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when this was judged as a weakness. Teachers use ongoing assessments in most subjects and classes to match tasks to pupils' immediate learning needs. However, in investigative science, tasks are usually set on the basis of broad target levels and not on the basis of what pupils know, understand and can do. This means that there are times when work is either too easy or too difficult for particular pupils and this reduces the progress that they make.
57. The school methodically assesses pupils with special educational needs in order to gain a good picture of their difficulties. Teachers use this information effectively to place pupils on appropriate levels of the special educational needs register. Most individual education plans record clearly what these pupils need to concentrate on in order to improve. As a result, pupils with special educational needs are making good progress against the targets set for them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. The school continues to promote itself very well with its parents and they hold the school in high esteem.
59. A number of parents help out in the classroom and many more assist on class visits into the community. For example, a parent comes in on a regular weekly basis to support the teaching of information and communication technology. Additionally, another parent, who is an engineer, supports lessons in design and technology. When this occurs it has a very positive impact on the learning of their children. Many parents have taken the opportunity to attend 'Parents as Educators' courses since the last inspection and this demonstrates their high level of commitment to the school. The 'Friends of Broad Oak' association runs a number of very well supported events such as the Christmas and summer fairs and the Millennium Mile sponsored walk. They have recently gained charitable status and this enables them to raise money for the school in public. During the year they raise approximately £3,000. This money is used to provide such things as the transport for all the pupils to visit to the theatre in Manchester and to purchase the large television monitor which is used to teach information and communication technology.
60. There are very good induction arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage, such as home visits, and these ensure that they settle quickly into school routines. Communication with parents about their children's progress is good, for instance through consultation evenings and the home-to-school reading diaries.
61. The information produced by the school for its parents is very good. The school entrance contains copies of all school policies, photographs of staff and governors and copies of recent minutes of governing body meetings. Photographs of recent school achievements are also displayed and all this creates a very welcoming environment for parents and visitors alike. The school sends out regular newsletters to parents and they contain useful information about all school events. Additionally, after special events such as the town 'Gala Day', pupils will write their views of the day. Class teachers send out regular informative topic letters, which allow parents to be aware of what their children are studying. Each year the school sends out a survey to its parents and their views create input into the school improvement plan. A recent example of this resulted in the improvement of the junior cloakroom facilities. The quality of annual reports on progress is also very good. They contain comments on how pupils can improve and allow for parental comment. The governing body makes its annual meeting for parents more interesting by calling it a 'Question and Answer session about your school'. This attracts almost 30 parents each year.
62. Communication with parents is good throughout the time that pupils are on the special educational needs register. Parents are informed and involved at an early stage in the process. Links between home and school are good and this helps to ensure that pupils receive the best possible support.
63. The support provided by parents and carers to home reading and to other homework is good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The leadership of the headteacher is of the highest quality. He is supported well by a hardworking deputy headteacher and a dedicated staff. It is no surprise that staff, governors, parents and pupils have the utmost respect for a headteacher who has been instrumental in creating an excellent ethos. Leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection and the school is well deserving of its status of a Beacon School⁴. There is a passion and determination to provide the highest quality of education and to raise standards. Although the management of the school is very efficient and effective, there is a genuine care for all pupils and a commitment to equal opportunity. As a result, this school is a pleasant, well-ordered and happy community, and an industrious learning environment. The mission statement and aims of the school reflect this commitment and are central to school life. Self-respect, self-esteem and the importance of valuing others are evident at all times and have a significant impact on pupils' learning. The headteacher and staff communicate this very effectively through school policies and their day-to-day involvement with each other, pupils, parents and governors.
65. Communication within school is very good, with everyone sharing the sense of common purpose. For example, teachers and non-teaching staff have a clear, practical vision of what constitutes high standards in attainment and teaching. Rigorous monitoring by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject co-ordinators and a local education authority adviser clearly identifies the strengths and areas for development. Where areas for development, such as in the Foundation Stage, are identified, the school takes prompt action to try and improve them. For example, teachers have visited other schools to view excellent practice in demonstration lessons and they have been supported by in-service training. In most subjects, this has led to the high quality of teaching and high standards. It has not been successful in the provision for children in the reception class.
66. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Staff work together as a team and have spent a considerable amount of time this year planning and implementing the new curriculum for children of this age. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning in the under fives by the school's subject co-ordinators is not effective. This is because the Foundation Stage curriculum does not relate directly with the National Curriculum, such as in knowledge and understanding of the world. The outdoor play area is under-used as a resource for children's physical development.
67. This school has an effective governing body, but there are currently three vacancies. Governors have developed their role extremely well since the previous inspection. They are very supportive and kept well-informed by the headteacher. Many governors have attended training to develop skills, such as interviewing, drugs awareness and performance management. They are satisfactorily involved in developing the school improvement plan and offer their ideas to take the school forward. Each governor is linked to a specific year group and they visit and observe their linked year group at work in the classroom. Whilst the governors play a satisfactory role in monitoring and evaluation of the school's standards and have a sound over-view, they need to ask more searching questions to fulfil their role as 'critical friend'.
68. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages issues relating to special educational needs effectively. She maintains and monitors records appropriately, ensures regular communication with all involved in helping to meet the needs of pupils, including parents, and maintains and regularly updates the special educational needs register. The governor for special educational needs is well informed through regular meetings with the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs. The number and quality of support staff enable pupils with special educational needs to be well

⁴ [Beacon status involves schools in sharing good practice and effective ways of working in partnership with other settings.](#)

supported. All support staff are well trained, which helps to ensure that they are well informed about the nature and range of disability. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support pupils with special educational needs. As all teaching and learning spaces are on one level, the accommodation enables the needs of these pupils to be met.

69. The school benefits from a range of experienced and newly qualified staff and they have an appropriate range of qualifications for a primary school. The classroom support staff are also well matched to the needs of the school and provide an effective contribution to pupils' learning.
70. The system that is in place for the professional development of all teaching and non-teaching staff is excellent and very thoroughly underpinned by the school's portfolio for Investors in People. This extends through to the induction of new members of staff whose introduction to the school is very carefully planned so as not to overload individuals with too much information at once. Good procedures are in place for the training of new teachers on placement from college.
71. The school's accommodation is good overall, although cramped classrooms in some areas mean that all pupils cannot carry out science investigation at the same time. This can create organisational problems in lesson planning. A benefit to the school is the additional room that can be used for music. The accommodation is very well cared for by the acting caretaker and cleaner who take a pride in their work. Many quality displays of artefacts and pupils' work also create a welcoming and stimulating environment for pupils, staff and visitors alike.
72. Resources in the school are satisfactory overall and good for special educational needs and history. Too few globes are available in geography and the selection of musical instruments could be extended usefully to provide more examples from other cultures. Additionally, there are too few small resources, such as balls, for physical education. The library needs to renew some of the non-fiction books.
73. School improvement planning is very good and effectively balances national priorities, such as the improvement in writing, with those identified by the school. Objectives within the plan are precise, action planning is suitably detailed, individual responsibilities and timescales are clear and resource implications have been evaluated. It includes accurate details of spending for the current year. There are good financial projections for one or two years ahead.
74. The school takes excellent action to meet its targets. The raising of standards is the cornerstone of all developments. The school makes very good use of detailed analysis of national tests and teacher assessment results to target its spending. The headteacher has a very good grasp of the principles of best value and co-ordinators effectively audit the resources for their subjects. The senior management team and governors use this information wisely to make spending decisions. The headteacher and governors regularly compare the performance of Broad Oak School with national and local schools in order to measure its effectiveness.
75. Office and teaching staff make very good use of information and communication technology for administration. The office administrators are efficient and ably support the headteacher. As a result the day-to-day administration and management of the school are very good and allow teachers and pupils to get on with their work with minimum disruption. The school has implemented the few minor recommendations in the auditor's report. The various grants available to the school, such as the Beacon Status grant, are controlled very well by the headteacher. The school uses these to support pupils' learning directly.

76. Taking into account the attainment of most pupils on entry, and when they leave the school, the progress they make and the quality of the education provided, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) improve the provision for children in the reception class by:
- improving the teachers' understanding of the early learning goals and how young children learn;
 - providing practical, stimulating, varied and challenging work that is meeting the children's needs;
 - establishing routines for all children so that they listen to others and take turns to speak, and praising their good behaviour more frequently;
 - improving children's knowledge and understanding of the world by encouraging them to become problem solvers and thinkers and providing more time to explore and talk about what they are doing;
 - improving the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage by more effective monitoring of the teaching and learning;
 - improving the organisation of the classroom and displays.

(paragraphs 1, 14, 21-22, 33, 45, 51, 65-66 and 79-87)

In addition to this issue, the governors should also consider the further point for improvement:

ensure that all staff have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work and implement a consistent strategy to deal with untidy work and handwriting, including the use of pens.

(paragraphs 4, 29, 94-95, 110, 117, 133 and 166)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	26	44	30	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	Not applicable	221
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	Not applicable	41

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	Not applicable	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	Not applicable	60

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	16	18
	Total	28	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	90 (73)	90 (84)	97 (87)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	28	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	90 (76)	94 (86)	97 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	14	13	15
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	31	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	97 (68)	91 (76)	100 (79)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	15	13	14
	Total	26	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	81 (79)	81 (79)	88 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	211
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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	0	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: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	27.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Financial information

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

	£
Total income	411,978
Total expenditure	410,065
Expenditure per pupil	1,864
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,379
Balance carried forward to next year	19,292

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 14%

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	16	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	23	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	36	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	36	3	3	0
The teaching is good.	81	19	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	36	13	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	19	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	19	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	52	42	3	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	81	16	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	26	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	78	19	3	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

79. The school has not made sufficient progress since the previous report. That report did not include a separate section on the areas of learning for children under five and did not mention the teaching specifically. Teaching for the school was satisfactory in the main and teaching for the under-fives remains the same. Children's attainment is now lower than it was. Formerly, their attainment was good in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world and progress was good. Children now make satisfactory progress in the main. Most children's attainment is in line with that expected for their age in personal and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.
80. The previous report showed that the school did not provide the full under-fives curriculum, although it did give children a good introduction to the National Curriculum. The school had no policy or aims to ensure that it met the needs of children of this age. The school has now made good progress in providing planning systems. The reception staff have spent a great deal of time recently discussing and devising planning for children's work based upon the new curriculum for children of this age. It now provides a policy, but this does not give sufficient information about the areas of learning or the school's approach to teaching them.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. Adults promote children's personal development competently by encouraging children to make choices about some of the activities they undertake, such as working in the sand tray or playhouse. They encourage children to take responsibility for resources, such as tidying equipment away at the end of a lesson, and most children respond well. Adults expecting all children to tidy away the resources could improve this. Most children settle readily into daily routines, such as registration, and are developing a satisfactory awareness that some actions are right and some are wrong.

Communication, language and literacy

82. The achievement of most children is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy. Adults provide some activities to develop children's communication skills effectively. The imaginative play area is designed as a shoe shop this term and staff sometimes use this to support children's play and extending their vocabulary. On other occasions staff miss opportunities to show children that they value their efforts at communicating, for example by listening to what they have to say at the beginning of the school day. Children enjoy listening to the stories that adults read to them. Higher and average-attaining children were enthused by the teacher reading them the story of *Not now Bernard*; 'Read it again.' They joined in with familiar phrases and one child identified a full stop. The main activity was on speech marks and this was not suitable for this stage of the children's development. Sometimes there are too many activities for staff to have sufficient time effectively to monitor, support and extend children's learning. Staff give a strong emphasis to the formal teaching of letter sounds and as a result many children name sounds in words and use the sounds well in their reading and writing. They recognise the words in the early stages of the reading scheme. Higher-attaining children are beginning to use this skill when sharing books with an adult.
83. The school could improve children's learning by organising the classroom books so that the children have easier access to them and as a result are able to use them more frequently. It could also provide a wider variety of interesting activities, such as using

treasure hunts or puppets to learn letter sounds. The formal teaching of handwriting has a positive effect on children's learning. Many children form letters correctly and write their name. The teaching of writing could improve, firstly by teachers placing greater value on the children's own attempts at 'having a go' with writing. Secondly, teachers could use and value a variety of activities, such as creating stories, poems and messages for children to share with each other.

Mathematical development

84. The achievement of most children is satisfactory in mathematical development. Teaching of basic number work is good; as a result the higher-attaining children achieve well in this aspect of their development. Higher- and average-attaining children count to 25. Higher-attaining children are beginning to add numbers to 10 and to record this work. Average-attaining children sort and match numbers to five and know that one less than four is three. Most of the lower-attaining children recognise numbers to five and count to 10. Higher- and average-attaining children recognise shapes, such as triangle and square, and are beginning to recognise and sequence patterns with increasing accuracy. Staff could improve children's development by helping them to see and discuss the mathematics all around them and encouraging them to become problem solvers and thinkers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. Children's achievement is satisfactory in knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff and parent volunteers support children competently in their work on the computer. Children use the mouse with increasing confidence to work the icons in a variety of programs. In a lesson on waterproof materials, children were interested in the clothes the teacher had brought to show them, such as a raincoat. During the group work children's learning declined. This was because they had insufficient time to explore and talk about the materials that the adult used to carry out the investigation. Children talk about things that have happened in the past, such as when they were babies. During the inspection this work was made more interesting by the visit of the minister from the United Reformed Church who talked to them about the Christening ceremony. Some children acted out the role of the parents and godparents using a doll dressed in a christening robe that belonged to one of the children. Although the talk was not long a significant minority of children found it difficult to listen carefully and behave well. Children use tools and construction materials safely to construct and build.

Physical development

86. Although the outdoor play area is underused, children's achievement in physical development is satisfactory. This is because of the teaching that takes place in lessons in the school hall. In a good dance lesson about building snowmen, the teacher developed the children's imagination and movement skills well. Children showed an increasing awareness of space, each other and the music. The lesson had a good structure and the teacher placed appropriate emphasis on working safely. Although the teaching was enthusiastic, a few children were not sufficiently motivated and found it difficult to concentrate. Teachers' lesson planning shows that the activities are not always suitable for children of this age. The planning for teaching over- and under-arm throwing techniques was at a suitable level for upper junior-aged pupils. Within the classroom teachers also teach the skills to help children gain safe control of finer movements, such as using glue spatulas and cutting with scissors.

Creative development

87. Children's achievements in creative development are satisfactory. Adults effectively support and extend imaginative play situations. In the 'shoe shop', adults encouraged children to act out the role of the shop assistant and customer. Children responded enthusiastically, for example they wrote orders for shoes. Children experiment with the untuned instruments that are on display in the shared area. They are taught and know a variety of songs, such as *The alphabet song* and *Raining again today*. Teachers give children many activities for making pictures. However, staff often determine the pictures children produce and do not give them sufficient encouragement to create their own pictures. Children made collage pictures of a person in a bed with a quilt on it because the children were learning about the sound 'qu'. There was little challenge in the task; the colours were chosen for them and the squares were already cut out. Children simply followed the adults' instructions and stuck the squares on to the paper.

ENGLISH

88. The school has maintained the good standards in English by the age of 11 shown in the previous report. Its results in the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds showed that standards in reading were below average and in writing they were average when compared with schools nationally. Standards were average in reading and above average in writing when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading and writing are now better than in the tests. Standards in writing are now above average and reading standards are now average. The improvements are because of the effective teaching in Key Stage 1. The teachers have good subject expertise and high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Year 2 teachers know each pupil's skills in reading and writing and what they need to teach in order to improve pupils' work. They use this knowledge when setting targets for pupils' writing and marking their work. They teach effectively basic reading skills, such as phonics and reading for meaning. This year the school introduced a good system for checking pupils' achievements in guided reading. Teachers are using this well to plan the next step in pupils' learning.
89. Standards for 11-year-olds have risen at a faster rate than the national trend since the previous inspection. The school's results in the national tests for 2000 showed that standards were high when compared with schools nationally and very high when compared with similar schools. The achievement of most pupils was high when it was compared with the standards they had achieved at the age of seven. Girls and boys achieved equally well. The evidence collected during the inspection shows that standards are now lower than this. They are above average in reading and writing. This is because there are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 class than in the class that undertook the national tests last year.
90. Most pupils enter the school with skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing that are average. Through effective teaching in Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievement is good in the main and girls and boys achieve equally well.
91. Inspection evidence shows that by the ages of 7 and 11 most pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with those found in other schools. Throughout the school, teachers use the correct technical words and they encourage pupils to use them in English and in other subjects. This leads to pupils' good learning; for example, Year 2 pupils use the terms 'phoneme' and 'vowel' and Year 6 pupils use 'adverbs' and 'glossary'. Teachers provide many activities to extend pupils' speaking skills in English and in other subjects. Firstly, they use planned discussions in small and larger groups, such as when pupils discuss their feelings and experiences whilst sitting in a circle, which the school calls circle time. Secondly, they use activities for role-play and drama, for

example in religious education lessons. As a result pupils extend their everyday vocabulary, their self-esteem and their confidence. During a Year 4 lesson pupils confidently and enthusiastically contributed to the discussion on similes. One pupil said 'The clouds are like stars bobbing up and down on a crystal blue Caribbean Sea'. Most pupils listen very carefully to teachers' explanations and instructions, and to the views of others. This contributes positively to the good rate of learning in all aspects of English.

92. Pupils' achievement is good and they reach average standards in reading in Year 2. Higher-attaining pupils read aloud confidently, accurately and with expression. Average and lower-attaining pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds and this helps them tackle words that are unfamiliar to them. The school has good stocks of fiction and information books for use in the literacy hour and these support pupils' learning in these lessons. Pupils take home a variety of books as well as the reading scheme and this promotes successfully their enjoyment of reading. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the school did not provide a sufficient variety of books. Good use is made of home-to-school reading diaries to communicate pupils' progress in the infants.
93. By the age of 11 higher-attaining pupils discuss what they read, showing that they understand it very well. Average-attaining pupils read confidently and talk enthusiastically about different authors. Lower-attaining pupils read less confidently and relate the reading to their own interests and experiences. Pupils of all abilities use the library system to locate books on particular shelves and the index, page heading and subheadings to find information in the books. Lower-attaining pupils need and receive support in these skills. The school is aware of the need to increase the information book stock in the central library. Year 6 pupils benefit from a daily session of silent reading. Pupils of all abilities use their reading skills well in their work in other subjects because teachers plan useful activities that extend these skills. During the inspection a group of Year 6 pupils used the Internet and reference books competently to find information on Buddhism in a religious education lesson.
94. In Year 2, writing is above average and this shows good achievement by the majority of pupils. Average and higher-attaining pupils spell words, and use full stops and capital letters with growing accuracy. Higher-attaining pupils are starting to use interesting words: 'On the way a cheeky monkey came and pinched the spiky pineapple. He sniffed it and it hurt his nose'. Lower-attaining pupils try their best and write simple phrases that are legible. Pupils are beginning to join their writing in their independent work and joined handwriting becomes more fluent in the lower juniors. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, which judged handwriting unsatisfactory in the infants and lower juniors.
95. By the age of 11 most pupils write stories with good attention to the plot. They use different forms of writing well, for instance poetry and newspaper reports. Higher and average-attaining pupils produce work in which the punctuation is accurate and the handwriting is joined and fluent. They use words very effectively. A higher-attaining pupil wrote 'Huge icicles hung from the sparkling exterior and the twinkling walls flashed in the golden sun'. An average-attaining pupil wrote 'She has wonderful bright blue eyes that sparkle in the sun'. In the upper juniors the standard of spelling is lower than it should be. The school is aware of this and has focused on giving pupils spellings to learn that are closely matched to their needs. The good approach to marking that some teachers have needs to be consistently applied in all classes. In a few classes in the school, teachers could ensure that pupils present their work more neatly. In the upper juniors, pupils using pen regularly would improve the presentation of pupils' work further.
96. In both key stages teaching is good. This is better than in the previous inspection when, in the main, teaching was good. There was very good teaching in Years 4 and 6. A strong feature of all the lessons is that teachers manage the different parts of the literacy

hour successfully. As a result pupils cover a good deal of work during the lesson. Teachers give clear explanations in the introduction and use the end of the lesson successfully to review pupils' understanding of the work. They make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in literacy lessons.

97. Teachers use attractive resources and interesting methods to gain pupils' interest. As a result most pupils enjoy their work, concentrate well and are keen to learn. They get on well together when working in pairs or groups. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and this leads to their very good behaviour and promotes pupils' good learning.
98. Support for pupils who have special educational needs is effective, including those pupils who are gifted and talented. Many pupils with special educational needs lack confidence and acquire new skills and knowledge in reading and writing slowly. Teachers plan the work for these pupils carefully and in the main focus clearly on their needs. Also pupils receive effective support from specialist classroom staff. As a result they make good progress in their learning in relation to their prior attainment.
99. Standards in many aspects of the subject are now better than in the previous inspection. This is due to, firstly, the very good system for assessment and the setting of targets for pupils to achieve in Year 6 and throughout the school. Secondly, the very effective co-ordinator monitors closely the teaching and learning of pupils throughout the school. Thirdly, teachers are strongly committed to improving standards.

MATHEMATICS

100. Standards of attainment in mathematics are in line with national expectations by the age of seven, but above national expectations by the age of 11 years. Pupils in Year 2 attain the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling) whereas pupils in Year 6 are above national expectations.
101. Standards currently achieved by pupils in Year 2 are in line with national expectations, but are slightly better than the standards reflected in the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds because more pupils are expected to achieve the higher level than the corresponding group last year. In 2000, standards in mathematics were close to the national average, but compared favourably with similar schools and were above average. The standards currently achieved by 11-year-olds are also better than those reflected by 11-year-olds in the national tests in 2000 and are above average. The reason for this is also that more pupils are on track to achieve the higher level than last year. In 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was well above the national average but the proportion of higher-attainers achieving the higher level was disappointing and well below the national average. A close scrutiny of the results showed that six pupils missed the achievement of the higher level by one or two points. When compared with similar schools, the standards achieved by 11-year-olds in 2000 were well above average. Since 1997, the school has maintained high standards when compared with similar schools and there has been a steady increase in the proportion of 11-year-olds reaching the standards expected in national tests. Standards will improve further if more of the higher-attaining pupils achieve the higher level.
102. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress. For example, in 2000, 31 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 were on the register of special educational needs and 70 per cent of these pupils achieved the nationally expected level for their age.
103. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100 and a small number are solving problems using numbers to 1,000. They know some of the properties

of two- and three-dimensional shapes and use measuring instruments accurately. For example, they know what a pentagon and a cylinder is and they can measure using metres and centimetres.

104. By the age of 11, pupils can work out calculations in their heads quickly, they understand fractions including decimal and percentage forms, are developing their understanding of coordinates and use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. They are confident to try different methods to solve problems and have sufficient opportunities to investigate number and shape and apply their skills when teachers set work involving real life problems.
105. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. Of the six lessons observed one lesson in Year 2 was very good, three lessons were good and two were satisfactory.
106. A positive feature in many lessons is the way that teachers encourage pupils to solve problems in their own way. For example, pupils in Year 5 calculated 13×12 by calculating 10×12 and adding to 3×12 to come to the answer 156. Pupils often use practical apparatus to help them to consolidate their understanding and to think hard. For example, when pupils in Year 1 were learning about tens and units, the teacher gave them plastic cubes and dinosaurs to sort. In another successful lesson, pupils in Year 6 were challenged to think about how they could use a computer program to find information about currency conversion.
107. The teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is soundly established and planning is good. Teachers clearly identify what pupils are to learn in the lesson and they share the objectives with pupils at the start. As a result there is a clear focus on what pupils are expected to learn. The use of clear questions at the end of sessions to assess what pupils have understood is a strong feature of teaching. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this results in pupils being able to explain their work using correct terminology. For example, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a secure understanding of the terms 'product', 'factor' and 'multiple' in their work on fractions. Teachers usually teach the oral and mental sessions with enthusiasm; pupils learn quickly and show good mental agility. A particularly positive feature was the effective use of whiteboards, which enabled the teacher to assess at a glance if pupils had a good understanding of their work. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills and in this part of the lesson teachers manage pupils and resources efficiently. Work is clearly planned for different ability groups and, in the main, is challenging for all.
108. In all areas of the school, pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is developed well. This is because teachers provide plenty of opportunities. For example, in Year 5 the teacher appropriately used a program about placing fractions in size order to support the work being done in the lesson. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects. For example, pupils are involved in numerical work when analysing data charts in their history work and when drawing graphs and taking accurate temperature readings in science.
109. The work that pupils do in mathematics provides good balance and variety in teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of all pupils. All children in the school have equal opportunities in mathematics irrespective of their ability, gender, ethnicity, class or language background. Children with special educational needs are taught within the daily mathematics lesson and receive good support. Where applicable, children's individual education plans include appropriate objectives from the National Numeracy Framework.

A popular after-school mathematics club provides a welcome opportunity for pupils to improve, consolidate or extend their learning.

110. There are good procedures in place to assess pupils' progress and knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. These procedures include regular observation and questioning of individual pupils as well as informal mental arithmetic tests, half-termly evaluations which review the work covered in the half-term and formal tests. Teachers use assessment appropriately to set sufficiently challenging targets for pupils in all year groups. Marking is variable. It is good in some classes, but there are shortcomings in others. Strengths include marking which is done in the presence of the pupil and followed by discussion with the pupil about misunderstandings. Weaknesses include the lack of expectation about neatness and failing to pick up on basic errors. For example, if a pupil does not draw a shape carefully with a ruler, it is not possible to be accurate about the size of an angle or the lines of symmetry. If a coordinate is written down as 1-9 instead of (1,9) without being corrected then confusion can follow.
111. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. It has reviewed the mathematics curriculum, improved the quality of teaching and strengthened the roles of the subject co-ordinators.

SCIENCE

112. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards in science are above national levels. This is an improvement on findings from the last inspection when standards were broadly typical of those found nationally. Inspection findings provide confirmation of the results from the most recent teacher assessments and national tests at 7 and 11, which indicate that more pupils than nationally are reaching nationally required standards. Teacher assessments at seven also indicate that more pupils than nationally are reaching the higher Level 3, especially in investigative science. However, test results at the end of Year 6 indicate that fewer pupils than nationally reach the higher Level 5. Inspection findings confirm this picture, which provides evidence that higher-attaining pupils are not always making the best possible progress in Years 3 to 6, especially in investigative science. Reasons for this include:
- work in experimental science is not sufficiently matched to pupils' needs, with all pupils often required to record the outcomes of investigations in the same way. This also affects the progress of some lower-attaining pupils who sometimes do not complete all the required work, which affects their levels of understanding;
 - the framework pupils use to record the results of investigations sometimes prevents higher-attaining pupils from doing as well as they can, as it is not sufficiently open-ended to enable them to record their results fully;
 - the size of some classes has implications for the organisation of practical work. Although teachers try to compensate for this, some pupils are unable to make good gains in learning because they do not always receive the support they need when they need it;
 - some teachers show that they are not fully confident teaching the investigative component of the subject.
113. Progress is good for many pupils as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make at least sound progress, especially when directly supported by the high quality support assistants. Pupils in Year 1 are already beginning to obtain, consider and record evidence to help them develop the skills of scientific enquiry. For example, through investigation, they discover that sound becomes fainter as it travels away. They are starting to appreciate that varying conditions when carrying out their investigation may give different results. They are beginning to record and interpret their findings, sometimes using information and communication technology. By the end of

Year 2, some pupils investigate the effects of a range of different surfaces placed over a ramp on the distance travelled by a car from stationary, when released at the top. Others explore the effects of raising the ramp on a car's movement. They make predictions about likely outcomes to their investigation and say whether what happened was as they expected. They begin to measure and accurately record their results to levels beyond national levels.

114. In Years 3 to 6, progress is more variable, especially in the development of scientific enquiry. In investigative work, it is mostly good for average-attaining pupils and satisfactory for pupils of higher and lower ability. In other areas of the subject, it is mostly good for all pupils. Year 4 pupils, through experimentation, show they can make a range of electrical circuits and use diagrams, including the use of appropriate scientific symbols, to represent their findings. They learnt that a switch cannot control a bulb's brightness, until a higher-attaining pupil indicated that dimmer switches do the job very well. Year 5 pupils are learning how forces can be measured and know that friction is a force which slows objects. They investigate the effects of different soles on shoes for grip. They accurately record their results and interpret their findings. Some can explain how to ensure the test is fair and know that repeating investigations give greater accuracy to their results. Year 6 pupils are studying, through an investigation about sugar dissolving in water, the effects of altering different variables on the outcome of the investigation. However, some pupils still require guidance and support to appreciate the need to ensure that they do not alter more than one variable as this will lead to an unfair test and will not give reliable results.
115. Teaching and learning is mostly good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers now give ample opportunities for scientific investigation. Teaching places good emphasis on pupils developing their knowledge. Very good teaching was observed in three classes. Features of these lessons were good questioning of pupils to extend knowledge and understanding, good use of support staff and resources to support learning, and good emphasis given to developing the skills of scientific enquiry. Very good relationships and control, together with much encouragement and praise of pupils' efforts, were also evident in these lessons. These features enabled most pupils to make good gains in learning. Where teaching is less successful, teachers lack confidence, organisation does not enable all pupils to make the best possible progress, control strategies are not fully effective, and work does not closely match pupils' different abilities. This hinders the development of scientific knowledge and understanding and slows progress for some pupils.
116. Pupils' attitudes to science are very good in Years 1 and 2, and are good elsewhere. Most pupils show high levels of involvement in practical work, especially when they are challenged. One pupil commented that learning was fun! Pupils mostly listen well, although a few pupils take too long to complete their work. Some pupils lack confidence when carrying out practical work and require help, support and reassurance. These pupils also show limited initiative and are reluctant to experiment to reach their own conclusions.
117. The subject co-ordinator is a very good teacher of science. She leads the subject soundly and has been instrumental in bringing about recent developments to help improve the quality of teaching and learning. These include the development of a portfolio to help level pupils' work to National Curriculum requirements and the monitoring of teaching and planning to ensure all required work is taught. Plans for further development include an increase in the use of information and communication technology in science. There are satisfactory systems for assessing attainment in science. Teachers analyse test results thoroughly to help identify targets for improvement. However, the presentation of work is too variable, such as in Year 3. Marking does not always celebrate success and help pupils to move forward.

ART AND DESIGN

118. The standard of pupils' work is similar to that found in other schools by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils' achievement in their work is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they receive from specialist support assistants. The school has not identified any gifted and talented pupils in art. The organisation of the inspection timetable meant that it was not possible to see any lessons in the infants and only one lesson in the juniors. Evidence was gained from discussions with teachers and pupils, and from pupils' work in sketchbooks and on display.
119. Year 2 pupils produce line drawings in the style of Bridget Riley. The work of a few pupils is of a good standard. It captures the detail and movement that the painter produced in her work and colours are used to good effect. Throughout the school, pupils' work in sketchbooks and in photographs shows that they use a variety of materials, such as clay and textiles. Some of the pupils' work is of a good standard. Teachers use art successfully to reinforce pupils' learning in other subjects, such as history.
120. In the one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory. Year 6 pupils produced satisfactory silhouette pictures of 'The Blitz' using a variety of materials. Pupils were keen to do the work; for example, one pupil asked if she could carry on with the work at home. Pupils' behaviour is very good because of the effective management by the teacher. This is based upon the very good relationships between them and clearly established classroom rules and routines. Also the teacher uses a variety of methods to maintain the pace of the lesson, such as slides on the overhead projector and this keeps pupils interested and promotes their concentration. Discussions with these pupils show that they have a sound understanding of the work of famous artists, such as L.S. Lowry and Van Gogh. The teacher could extend pupils' creativity and thinking more by allowing them to make more choices about the resources they use. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to support pupils' learning. During the inspection, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils used the computer to plan their pictures.
121. Additional activities, such as the very successful 'Out of Africa' week, enhance the curriculum. Pupils across the school produced work using a variety of methods and materials, such as printing, three-dimensional African masks and attractive clay snakes. The school also used this activity effectively to increase pupils' understanding of other cultures. Pupils' work is also made better by staff encouraging pupils to take part in competitions in the community, such as the Easter egg competition in the main shopping centre.
122. The co-ordinator supports teaching and learning effectively, for example through the useful portfolio of pupils' work and by monitoring pupils' sketchbooks and work on display. She co-ordinates the planning of the art theme week. Teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons and the co-ordinator has plans to provide formal systems for doing this on a regular basis. The co-ordinator uses pupils' sketchbooks very well to track their progress in the different aspects of art. This practice needs to be more consistent throughout the school. The subject is now better than it was in the previous inspection. Standards have been maintained, the curriculum is more varied and interesting and teachers' lesson planning has improved.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The quality of pupils' learning is good in projects that enable them to apply and improve their skills of making, evaluating and changing the things that they make. Examples are the annual theme weeks when pupils in the whole school carry out a specific design and making activity. They recently produced a variety of packages. As a result, pupils produce effective and original end products such as the packages created from cereal boxes in Year 2 and the packages made from nets in Year 4. The propeller driven vehicles, made by pupils in Year 5 to take part in a 'Great Egg Race', provide further evidence of this. However, the development of design skills is less secure and progress is more variable as pupils move through the school.
124. Pupils develop suitable skills in making by working with a range of materials, methods and tools. The range of materials used includes wood, enabling pupils to use specific tools such as saws and drills, to produce rigid end products.
125. Year 1 pupils, when making a banana milk shake and a fruit salad, are able to name the ingredients for their product. By the end of Year 2, pupils design, make and decorate puppets. The good finished products are original and colourful. They provide evidence that the various materials involved in this project have been joined in different ways. With very good support from British Aerospace, they use pneumatic technology to make animated amphibians, such as a pneumatic frog. Year 5 pupils design a sail for a sand yacht, most completing realistic plans for their intentions. By the end of Year 6, in a link with their history work on the Second World War, pupils design and make frames for air raid shelters. Pupils are working with greater accuracy, paying attention to its purpose and to the quality of finish.
126. Pupils' evaluations of their end products are sometimes too general, but most reflect back to what the plans said the results would be like. For example, this happens when older pupils design, make and evaluate musical instruments, and when they make a rigid decorated box.
127. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. There is, therefore, not enough evidence to make judgements about the teaching of design and technology or about pupils' attitudes to the subject. However, in the one lesson seen, most pupils were enthusiastic about the work they were doing. Teaching in this lesson was sound, with satisfactory relationships and subject knowledge evident, and good praise and support given. A strong feature of this lesson was the emphasis on safe working practices.
128. The leadership of the subject is good and there are plans for the subject's continued development. These include the monitoring of skills to ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning. This is important, as there is no means of monitoring pupils' progress at present. The link with British Aerospace benefits both parties and has resulted in considerable development of the design and technology curriculum. Food technology is well represented, especially in Years 1 and 2. However, there are no agreed methods for assessing pupils' attainment. As a result, teachers' knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do is of limited value in planning future learning. Work studied provides evidence that some staff are more secure than others in their ability to teach the subject effectively.

GEOGRAPHY

129. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in geography by the end of Year 2. However, there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement at the end of Year 6 as no geography was seen in that year.
130. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in the development of mapping skills as they move through the school, with this important aspect of geography being well represented in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the countries of the United Kingdom and can name some of the countries of Europe. Year 3 pupils draw a map with a simple key, draw a map of their route from home to school and learn the names of the world's continents. By Year 5, pupils are using an atlas to locate geographical information. They build a geographical vocabulary by using words, such as latitude, longitude and equator, when developing their mapping skills.
131. Information and communication technology is evident in geography. For example, Year 2 pupils produce a plan using a computer program and Year 5 pupils maintain a simple weather record using a computer. However, this requires further development.
132. Pupils also make satisfactory gains in learning about places, of natural and man-made features of the environment and of environmental change. For example, from a study of the labels on a variety of products, Year 1 pupils learn that the food we eat comes from different countries. They begin to appreciate that some types of fruit will only grow where it is hot and sunny. By Year 5, pupils learn of the impact of industrial sites on the landscape. In a superficial study of Kenya, they extend their geographical vocabulary, learning 'desert', 'plateau', and 'volcano'. However, learning through outside study is given too little emphasis. Teachers give too little attention to the development of skills, such as the use of fieldwork techniques, and the collecting, recording and evaluating of evidence gained through investigation.
133. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching as too few lessons were observed. However, in a good lesson seen in Year 1, the teacher knew exactly what she expected pupils to learn and used time, resources and support staff well to achieve her objectives. She had secure subject knowledge and made good use of this to ask probing questions that teased out pupils' understanding. The teacher successfully motivated pupils, who quickly became enthusiastic and involved. However, teachers do not use assessment consistently to discover what pupils know and understand. Consequently, work is sometimes not matched carefully to their abilities. Some teachers do not pay sufficient attention to the presentation of pupils' work and there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking.
134. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory, although pupils responded well in one lesson. This was because the teacher brought the subject to life by providing objects and resources to aid learning. She generated enthusiasm through her confident and lively approach.
135. The subject leadership is satisfactory. The part time co-ordinator has some plans for the further development of geography throughout the school. Plans include improving the curriculum and extending the use of information and communication technology. The monitoring of teaching and learning, planned for but not yet introduced, is required to help the co-ordinator more readily assess strengths and weaknesses in the subject. There are too few visits to enrich the geography curriculum.

HISTORY

136. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in history by the end of Year 2 as too little work was seen in that year. However, pupils attain satisfactory standards in most aspects of the subject by the end of Year 6. Pupils' understanding of the passing of time and their knowledge of events, people and changes in the past are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils reinforce and communicate their understanding of history in different ways, such as writing, pictures, the use of maps and discussion.
137. There are good links between history and other subjects, such as English, art and geography. For example, in English, Year 6 pupils write about what it feels like to be an evacuee. In geography, Year 3 pupils study a map to discover the extent of the Roman Empire, while Year 6 complete a map showing countries invaded by Germany before Britain entered the Second World War. These links give added meaning to pupils' work in history and add to the quality of their learning. Links with information and communication technology are satisfactory; older pupils especially get some opportunity to use computers to help them with their history. For example, Year 4 find out about the Tudors using the Internet and Year 6 use information and communication technology to plot a graph over a ten-year period before the outbreak of the Second World War.
138. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 1 begin to understand the passage of time when they sequence pictures showing the story of the Gunpowder plot. They write a statement about when they were a baby, a toddler and now, to show that they can relate events in chronological order. Year 3 pupils build on this developing understanding by placing pictures from the Romans to the Vikings to show how time has passed. Year 4 put pictures of Tudor monarchs in the correct order, showing deepening understanding over a longer time period.
139. The development of skills of historical enquiry is satisfactory. For example, Year 3 study Anglo-Saxon artefacts to discover the clothes they wore and how they compare with those of today. Year 6 pupils use books, newspapers, implements of the time, such as gas masks, and a video clip to learn about the effects of the bombing of London by the German airforce in 1940.
140. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching by the age of seven, but by the age of 11 it is satisfactory. Good teaching was seen in Year 6 and in this lesson pupils achieved well. This was because the teacher selected and used resources well and this captured pupils' attention. Good questioning enabled pupils to think for themselves and consider how people may have felt during the Blitz. Secure subject knowledge, brisk pace and good relationships were other strengths of this lesson, which ensured that all pupils were fully involved.
141. The leadership of the subject is sound. Plans for the subject's development include setting up a museum in school and extending the range of software to increase the use of information and communication technology. Visits enrich the curriculum, such as to Wigan pier and a local Viking centre. A good range of objects from the past, many borrowed from local museums, helps to bring the subject to life for pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when too many worksheets were used. However, the school makes insufficient use of the local area to develop historical understanding. Work is rarely matched to pupils of different abilities to enable them to make the best possible progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. The majority of pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. These findings are in line with the findings of the last inspection and are the result of good quality teaching, the implementation of a broad curriculum and the recently purchased good quality equipment to support teaching and learning.
143. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. Pupils are competent in using the keyboard and mouse of the computer and can save and retrieve information. Pupils display good levels of competency in word-processing and write and amend sentences on the computer screen. They have a sound understanding of how to program a controllable floor robot and show this by planning a route for the robot to follow. Pupils have secure skills in using databases, for example when producing pictograms and a variety of charts. Pupils in Year 2 showed the versatility of an art program by designing and producing a mask in their design and technology work and supported their geography work by creating and drawing a treasure map on the computer screen. They describe sensibly the benefits of using a computer and explain how it helped them.
144. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards overall are in line with the national expectation and a significant number of pupils achieve beyond this. Pupils begin to work with confidence and independence across the elements required by the National Curriculum. Almost all pupils can access, save and retrieve information independently including information from the Internet. Word-processing skills are extended well and in Years 5 and 6 the standards achieved when using text and pictures are good. For example, pupils in Year 5 produced a professional looking leaflet to advertise a theme park with a stately home. This work helped to enhance pupils' literacy skills as they linked this to their study of Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalott*. Pupils build well on their skills of controlling a floor robot and they translate them to show how they can create shapes on the computer screen. In Years 4 and 5, pupils have the skills to monitor external events, for example when they use a temperature sensor to monitor the changes in temperature as water changes from ice to steam. Many pupils demonstrated their skills of accessing information from compact discs and the Internet. They have used the information well in their research about the Second World War and the River Nile. Pupils in Year 3 have used an art program to consolidate their understanding of symmetry and communicate their ideas by producing designs by 'flipping' pictures. By Year 6, pupils are competent in entering, sorting and classifying data and presenting their findings using a range of graphs and charts. This work was seen to very good effect in supporting pupils' work in history as they studied charts of unemployment statistics in the 'Depression' years. A digital camera is used well to record the finished article in pupils' design and technology work.
145. Throughout the school and in all subjects, pupils use information and communication technology well, especially in promoting and enhancing their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils in Year 5 wrote stories based on *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jan Scieszka and edited their work on screen. In Year 6, pupils create a variety of graphs showing the relationship between pupils' spans and their height.
146. The quality of teaching has many good features. Teachers have improved their own skills rapidly as the result of effective in-service training. In addition, a new scheme of work and sound assessment procedures provide guidance and enable teachers to plan work that builds on previous learning. Most teachers now have sufficient expertise and confidence to provide challenging and useful tasks. Pupils have a responsible attitude to learning with computers and other equipment. It was interesting to observe pupils sensibly and skilfully using the fax machine to send details of the weather to a school in a

different part of the country and operating the audio equipment in assembly. Pupils respond with clear enthusiasm and enjoy the experience of using computers so regularly. They behave well and their positive attitudes are harnessed effectively and result in good progress and fun.

147. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator should be commended for her efforts in improving the quality of information and communication technology since the last inspection. By monitoring teachers' planning and keeping a close check on the work of pupils, standards are clearly continuing to improve. The curriculum is broad and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, the very good links with the University of Central Lancashire have been maintained and close links with the information and communication technology department of a nearby technology college have been developed. The access of pupils to a 'State of the Art' computer suite with support from expert staff is of great benefit to pupils' learning, particularly their social and personal development and community links.

MUSIC

148. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music-making activities. The teaching of singing is particularly good and tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers is good. The musical provision is further enhanced by opportunities for pupils to play recorder, guitar, brass and wind instruments, and to sing in a choir. This enables the more-able pupils to achieve well. The pupils aged 7 to 11 who play musical instruments attain particularly good standards in their ability to read and play music. They occasionally perform in assembly and in concerts, such as those held at Christmas and at the end of the summer term.
149. Pupils throughout the school sing well. Younger pupils sing well showing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. Older pupils build well on their singing skills. They are able to control the dynamics of their voices and add meaning to their songs through the use of phrasing and this achieves singing of a good standard. They have the skills to communicate mood and feeling, reflecting the lyrics. Pupils hear and occasionally sing songs from a range of cultures. In Year 6 pupils performed well the Negro spiritual *Now Let Me Fly*. They are able to sing in two or more parts. Their diction is clear and they are taught to adopt a good posture, breathing techniques and how to shape their mouths to produce an improved sound. Their singing represents vitality and a good level of accuracy. Pupils read the words of hymns and songs competently, which consolidates their literacy skills.
150. Pupils have a sound knowledge of composers and their works. There are a few occasions when pupils listen to a variety of music of different styles and times, but these can be usefully extended. During the inspection pupils listened to the music of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and considered whether the composer's choice of instruments to represent the characters was a good choice. However, teachers miss opportunities to discuss pupils' own taste in music and to probe the reasons 'why' pupils prefer certain music and to compare their choices with others. On other occasions it is disappointing that some assemblies and acts of collective worship are totally lacking in music.
151. It was not possible to observe any pupils composing music and the school recognises that this aspect of music is the least secure. Some teachers lack confidence in developing pupils' composition skills.
152. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall, but it is often good when taught by the co-ordinator who is a music specialist and a good lesson

was observed in Year 6. In some classes, the teachers' subject knowledge is sufficient to teach basic musical skills and knowledge, but insufficient to challenge and extend pupils' creative abilities. The teacher in Year 6 effectively linked the music lesson to the current topic of World War II and pupils sang songs of that period, which they found interesting. The teacher used correct musical terms throughout and the pupils accurately used these in their discussions with the teacher. The teaching of the choir and instrumental ensemble is good and enhanced by the effective involvement of a non-teaching assistant.

153. There was insufficient evidence to judge how well pupils are taught to create or improvise music or to compose or evaluate their performances. Pupils' response to music is generally good, although the older boys are not enthusiastic singers. However, most other pupils are interested, motivated to learn and genuinely enjoy the subject. Pupils in the choir and instrumental ensemble take pride in performing to a high standard and are sufficiently confident to perform in productions at various times throughout the year. The extra-curricular musical activities are well attended, although mainly by girls, and support pupils' social development. Pupils' social and cultural development is also promoted by occasional visits to the theatre. For example, the school recently visited the Lowry Theatre to see a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Pupils were 'spellbound' at the way the actors sang in close harmony to accompany others without an instrumental backing.
154. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection. More music is happening. There has been an increase in the provision for pupils to play instruments. Teachers are using a more structured approach to teaching music and they are helped by more detailed guidance from the scheme of work. This helps them plan their lessons and gives guidance for non-teaching staff to support them. There is a satisfactory system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in music from one year to the next and this means that work is not repeated without good reason. The co-ordinator monitors teaching occasionally and evaluates the half-termly planning. Her role as a curriculum leader is effective, but now needs to focus more on improving the teaching of composition and appraising of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

155. The school provides a balanced programme of physical education, which fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, participate in gymnastic activities and respond to music through dance. All pupils have opportunities for swimming lessons; by the time they leave the school the majority are competent swimmers and can swim at least 25 metres unaided. No games lessons were observed during the inspection. There have been significant improvements in the quality of physical education teaching since the last inspection.
156. Standards are in line with the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, good and sometimes very good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well for their age group in gymnastics and dance. This good rate of achievement continues in the early years of Key Stage 2 and is consolidated in Years 5 and 6. This is due to consistently good or very good teaching in those classes coupled with the widespread participation of older pupils in good quality extra-curricular sports. The school has maintained standards in Key Stage 1 and improved them in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection.
157. In Key Stage 1, pupils use the space around them competently and safely, showing good control and awareness of others. Many can make personal choices about their movements, practising and refining simple movements and sometimes collaborating in small groups with small and large apparatus. They follow instructions well, for example by changing the speed, shape or direction of their movement on command. When given the opportunity, pupils perform confidently, responding positively to suggestions for

extending their ideas and further raising their standards. From an early age they use their observational skills to describe and talk about what they are doing. In a very good dance lesson in Year 2, pupils demonstrated very good interpretations of a rabbit with a twitchy nose and a proud and strong lion as they stayed in character to perform a folk story from India.

158. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their use of space by travelling imaginatively on floor and apparatus. A significant minority demonstrate very good control when balancing on or dismounting from apparatus. Year 4 pupils, for example, demonstrated good balance and poise in gymnastics, combining rolls, jumps and balances with smooth and flowing links to perform a sequence of movements. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work and this enhances their performance. They are well aware of safety issues and understand the effect that sustained energetic activity has on the body.
159. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and some very good lessons were seen. Of the six lessons seen, three were very good, two were good and one was satisfactory. Teachers use the scheme of work well and follow lesson plans carefully. They clearly focus on the skills to be taught and developed and ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and supported. Teachers' relationships with the pupils are very good and they manage pupils well. Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to them. In the very good lessons seen in Years 2, 3 and 4, for example, the classes were so absorbed by the challenges set for them that they were intent only on improving their own performance and doing their best. Lessons are rigorous and provide a good range of activities. As a result, pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. They clearly enjoy the activities planned for them and respond with enthusiasm. They co-operate well with each other and follow teachers' instructions carefully. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their skills and sensitively appraise each other's performance in order to improve it. They are regularly given and readily accept responsibility for setting out and storing away equipment.
160. A number of teachers provide a wide range of after-school sports clubs, which are very well attended. There is a deliberate policy to ensure that these activities are available to boys and girls and pupils of all abilities. This reflects a strong commitment by the school to providing equality of access to extra-curricular activities.
161. The subject is led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who clearly knows how he wants the subject to develop. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the leadership since he has been in the role for only one term.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

162. The school has made good progress in the subject since the previous inspection. Teachers now place a greater emphasis on spiritual understanding and provide time for pupils to reflect upon their work. As a result of these changes, pupils' achievement has improved from satisfactory to good throughout the school. The subject co-ordinator has produced an effective scheme of work that corresponds to the locally agreed syllabus and supports teachers well in planning their lessons. This year she has introduced a good system for checking pupils' learning at the end of a series of lessons and this is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The organisation of the inspection and the school's timetables meant that it was not possible to see any lessons in the infants and only one lesson in the juniors. Evidence was gained from discussions with teachers and pupils and from pupils' work in books and on display.
163. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers' lesson plans, the attractive displays and pupils' work in books show that teachers have sound expertise in

the subject. These also show that teachers take account of pupils' knowledge and experiences and in the main they provide a balanced religious education programme. As a result pupils have a sound knowledge of the world's leading faiths, such as Christianity and Islam. A discussion with Year 2 pupils shows that they have a good knowledge of Bible stories, such as the Christmas and Easter stories. They are developing soundly their knowledge of the main festivals of religious faiths, such as Hanukkah in Judaism.

164. In the very good lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher used a variety of interesting methods to gain pupils' interest, such as note taking, drama and a video. This promoted pupils' high levels of concentration and learning. Through probing questions she encouraged pupils to reflect upon their work; 'Why do you think the eight fold path is represented as a dharma wheel?' This challenged pupils to think carefully and they responded very well; 'It never ends, you have to keep doing it.' She developed pupils' social, moral and literacy skills very effectively. She did this particularly well through the drama. Pupils planned, practised and acted out one of the eight fold paths of Buddhism. She expected pupils in the audience to watch and listen carefully, reflect upon and make competent notes on the performance. Meanwhile a group of pupils researched the topic in the library using the Internet and reference books. These pupils made very good progress in this work because of the effective questioning and support from the classroom assistant. All the pupils were highly motivated by the work; 'Look it says this, we need to write that down'...'Can I finish this at home?' (said with great enthusiasm).
165. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, including gifted and talented pupils. This is because of the effective support they get from teachers, specialist and classroom support assistants.
166. Pupils also benefit from the celebration of religious festivals, for example through assemblies about Diwali and Eid. Teachers make good use of local resources, such as places of worship, and of the expertise of religious leaders to enrich pupils' learning. They also promote pupils' learning through additional activities within the school, such as the theme week on different faiths. In a few classes, teachers could ensure that pupils present their work more neatly.