

INSPECTION REPORT

BAXENDEN ST JOHN'S C E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Baxenden, Accrington

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119440

Headteacher: Mr J Howard

Reporting inspector: Mr D Hardman
17794

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 3 March 2000

Inspection number: 191914

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Avenue Baxenden Accrington Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Ratcliffe
Date of previous inspection:	18 11 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D Hardman Registered inspector	Science Information technology	Characteristics Standards and the school's results Teaching Leadership
Mr R Williams Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Partnership with parents Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Attendance
Mrs A Lawson Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	The school's care for the pupils
Mrs M Spark Team inspector	Art History Music Under fives	Curricular opportunities
Mr G Halliday Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Baxenden St John's CE Primary School is situated in the Baxenden ward on the edge of the town of Accrington. It serves a wide geographical area. There is a broad social mixture in the school and the full range of ability is represented. Pupils' abilities on entry are about average and standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2.

There are 118 boys and 119 girls currently on roll. There are currently no pupils who have English as an additional language and very few from ethnic minorities. Approximately two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. Twenty four per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs; this is broadly in line with the national average and two per cent have statements of special educational need, which is about the national average.

The school's mission statement states that 'Baxenden Church of England Primary School exists to provide quality education and Christian nurture, both fulfilling the requirements of the National Curriculum and helping children to discover and develop a lively personal faith in Christ, according to the school's trust deed. We aim to help each pupil to develop his or her full potential in a happy, caring, stimulating and safe environment'.

The main targets identified in the school's development plan are to:

- raise standards in literacy and numeracy in Year 6;
- implement a structured approach to monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching in the school;
- reduce numbers in Key Stage 1 classes;
- enhance the role of curriculum co-ordinators;
- review schemes of work in light of the intended revised curriculum;
- utilize the government grant for information technology;
- review short term planning.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Baxenden St John's CE Primary School is a very good school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is very good. Pupils are taught well and overall they attain good standards of work in relation to their potential. Relationships in the school are excellent and all staff work very effectively together. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards achieved by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science are well above average and pupils make very good progress.
- The leadership of the school by the headteacher, senior management team and governors is very good.
- The quality of teamwork by all staff and volunteer helpers is very good and fosters an excellent ethos in the school.
- Teaching is good, often very good and sometimes excellent throughout the school.
- The procedures and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Relationships and opportunities for personal development are excellent.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The links with the parents are very good and their contribution to pupils' learning is excellent.

What could be improved

- The equipment the school has to support certain aspects of information technology.
- The use of information technology to support teaching and learning in other subjects, particularly mathematics and science.
- The provision of suitable resources to further extend opportunities for children under five to undertake independent activities both inside and outside the classroom.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress to improve the quality of curricular planning. The purpose of long-term, medium-term and short-term planning is clearly defined. Teaching staff have been provided with files containing learning objectives, level descriptions and key skills for each subject as an aid to more precise planning. Detailed description of targets with assessment and record keeping has resulted in staff agreement to undertake the scrutiny of pupils' work and this is being implemented. The range of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual pupils has been considerably improved. The school has purchased a range of extension materials that are used by the more able pupils and those with special educational needs. Groups of pupils, both less and more able, have been identified and work is planned to provide individual programmes of study for all pupils.

The school development plan is now very good. All staff and governors are involved in detailed discussions prior to setting the plan. The present plan incorporates areas of staffing, management, curriculum and buildings. The identified priorities include targets for achievement, the estimated costings and the persons responsible. The school has made satisfactory progress in reviewing the size of the reserve account. The finance committee regularly monitors the use of this account and money has been allocated to maintain the present level of staffing as well as financing an increase in the number of support staff compared with previous years. The governors have approved a number of improvement projects funded from the reserve account. The reserve account is still quite large; however, the governors have very good plans for its use, which includes a significant contribution to the building and equipping of a new classroom, further expenditure on resources for information technology and improving resources for children under five in the reception class.

There has been very good progress in improving the quality of education for children under five. This has included a strategy for raising standards and the reception class teacher, appointed in September 1997, is having a very positive impact on children's attainment and learning. The teaching week has been restructured and the support of adult assistants and volunteer helpers is providing very good quality experiences for children. However, there is still a need to improve the resources available to further develop the opportunities for children under five to engage in independent learning both indoors and outside.

The school has made very good progress in the monitoring of the curriculum. The headteacher, senior management team and subject co-ordinators regularly monitor the teaching and delivery of subjects. Co-ordinators also monitor teachers' detailed planning and pupils' written work. Training needs of staff are recorded and their roles are clearly identified. Literacy, numeracy and science co-ordinators have planned and presented in-service training to their colleagues, which has had a positive impact on the teaching of these subjects.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	C	A	A
mathematics	B	C	A	B
science	C	A	B	C

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The table shows that in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds, the school's results were well above the national averages in English and mathematics and above the average for science. These results largely reflect the outcomes of the inspection, which find that, by the age of eleven, pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Pupils' attainment, in the present Year 6, in science is an improvement on last year's results. This is mainly due to the good focus on investigative science throughout the school. When compared with similar schools, pupils performed well above the average in English, above in mathematics and the same as similar schools in science. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is above the improving national trend. The school is maintaining high standards and is well on its way to meet its agreed statutory targets.

By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in information technology that match those expected for their age. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in art, history and music is above the level expected for their age. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 matches that expected for their age in geography, design and technology and physical education. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above the level expected for their age in design and technology and physical education, it matches the level expected in geography.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and their work. They enjoy coming to school and this has a very positive impact on their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils show high levels of self-discipline, they know what is expected of them and they behave very well. Pupils are very courteous and take great pleasure in opening doors for adults. They are considerate of others when they move around the building, use the dining hall and play at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are excellent. They take responsibility for their actions; mutual support and respect for others results in an excellent school ethos.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and well above the national average. There have not been any exclusions from the school in the previous two years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good often very good	Very good	Very 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.

Sixty five lessons or part lessons were seen. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons, it was good in 34 per cent and very good or better in a further 52 per cent. Despite two unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection, teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The headteacher is implementing the school's policy for monitoring and improving teaching and it is being used effectively to raise the quality of all teachers' performance. Teaching was consistently good and often very good for children under five. Teaching was good, often very good and occasionally excellent in both key stages. The quality of teaching throughout the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. The teaching of basic skills is very good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by very good teaching that provides challenging activities. The high expectations teachers have of pupils' behaviour and effort, the very well organised and managed lessons, which maintain a brisk pace all make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of the teamwork by teachers,

support staff and volunteers has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and the high standards they achieve in English, mathematics and science.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is planned effectively and enhanced by a good range of activities, which has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teachers know their pupils well and, therefore, quickly identify those who need additional support. Individual education plans set clear targets for future learning and pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. Collective worship makes a very strong contribution to the Christian ethos and pupils have a thorough understanding of living in a caring community. Pupils are taught to care for one another and property, respect the views and values held by others and take pride in their own cultural traditions. They are encouraged to reflect on joys, sorrows and take pleasure in their achievements.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. All staff know pupils very well and excellent relationships make a very positive contribution to the family ethos in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and give a clear educational direction for the school. The quality of teamwork by all staff and volunteer helpers is very good and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Co-ordinators effectively monitor teaching and learning in their subject areas.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities very well. Governors are committed to helping the school move forward and are fully involved in the preparation of the school development plan intended to improve provision and raise standards further. Governors make a very good contribution to the effective running of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of new initiatives. It makes good use of the data generated by national tests to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school uses a wide range of assessment procedures to monitor pupils' attainment and progress and target specific areas when required. The school knows its strengths and areas for development and has a good grasp on how to improve further.
The strategic use of resources	The school has sufficient staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and staff are well deployed throughout the school. The provision of support staff is very good and they play an important role in the life of the school and make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is very well maintained by a very conscientious caretaker and staff. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory and used effectively. Specific grants are used very well for their designated purpose. The school's finances and administration procedures are good. The school ensures that educational initiatives are carefully costed. The school provides very good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Their children are making good progress.• Behaviour in the school is good.• Teaching is good.• They feel they can go to the school with any questions or problems.• The school expects children to work hard.• The school helps children to become more mature and responsible.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework children receive.• The information on their children's progress.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. The school is making good progress in raising standards of attainment and has very good relationships with parents. The school sends reports to parents twice a year and, coupled with open evenings and the 'open door' policy, provides good information to parents on pupils' progress. Although the school does not notify parents of a timetable for homework for each class, the inspection team found that an appropriate amount is being set by the school to help raise standards and improve pupils' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Education for children under five is provided in one reception classroom. The children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, approximately 50 per cent of the children in the reception class were under the age of five. The provision is appropriate for the needs of children under five but accommodation in the reception class restricts access to the activities which staff would wish to provide in order to effectively consolidate learning. There has been a very significant and marked improvement in provision since the last inspection. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team promoting high educational standards. The curriculum is generally well-planned and provides a broad and balanced programme of experiences suitable for children under five. Children learn through appropriate teacher directed activities, but there is not always sufficient provision for access to structured play activities in order that children may make choices for themselves and develop independence in their learning. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all of the areas of learning. By the time they are five, almost all children's attainment is above what is expected in language and literacy and, in all other areas of learning, matches that expected for children of this age.

- 2 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in English is above the level expected for their age. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, results in reading and writing were close to the national average. When compared to similar schools, the results in 1999 were below the average. The proportion of seven-year-olds reaching the higher levels in reading and writing was well above the national average. In teacher assessments of speaking and listening, pupils' attainment was below the national average and the number of pupils reaching the higher levels was close to the national average. The school expected these results because of the higher number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 last year. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English is well above the level expected for their age. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999, pupils' results were well above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Standards of literacy are high and are improved by the opportunities taken in other subjects, such as science, history and geography, to promote speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

- 3 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 test for mathematics for seven-year-olds attainment was close to the national average. The proportion attaining the higher level was also close to the national average. When the school's performance in 1999 is compared with similar schools, the results in Key Stage 1 are close to the average. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' attainment was well above the national average. The proportion reaching the higher level was well above the average. When compared with similar schools, the school's results in mathematics were above the average for these schools. Pupils use their numeracy skills very well in other subjects such as science by, for example, working out the strength of forces and accurately recording results of scientific experiments.

- 4 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in science is above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 teacher assessment in science for seven-year-olds pupils' attainment was close to the national average. The proportion attaining the higher level was above the national average. When the school's performance in 1999 is compared with similar schools, the results in Key Stage 1 are close to the average for these schools. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in science is well above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' attainment was above the national average. The proportion reaching the higher level was also above the average. When compared with similar schools, the school's results were close to the average.
- 5 Pupils attain good standards of work in relation to their potential. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is above the improving national trend. The school is maintaining high standards and setting realistic targets to improve further. Although the attainment of pupils with special educational needs is below their class average in both key stages, pupils make good progress in their learning, particularly in their literacy and numeracy skills. The school makes effective use of baseline assessment data in the reception class. Regular school-based subject tests and national test data are used to identify pupils with special needs and then set appropriately challenging targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs meet the targets set out in their individual education plans.
- 6 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the national expectation. Pupils express themselves confidently and expressively. They listen carefully to their teachers, and to each other, and contribute maturely to group and class discussions. In Key Stage 2, pupils' skills are developed further and they respond very well to the planned opportunities for expressing feelings, voicing opinions and describing events.
- 7 By the end of Key Stage 1, the standard of reading is good and the vast majority of pupils have a reading age above that expected of seven-year-olds. There is a significant number of higher attaining readers who demonstrate a good degree of fluency, expression and understanding when reading. Many of these pupils are already independent readers and have access to a wide range of books. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standard of reading is very good and the majority of pupils have a reading age well above that expected of eleven-year-olds. Pupils read from a range of fiction and non-fiction books. By Year 6, many pupils are fully independent readers and the majority read accurately and fluently with very good expression.
- 8 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is above the level expected for their age. In Key Stage 1, progress is good and careful attention is given to handwriting, punctuation and spelling. Pupils are encouraged to write unaided from an early age and by the end of Key Stage 1, their writing is clear and neat. In Key Stage 2, progress is good and sometimes very good: pupils' attainment is well above what is expected for their age. Pupils make good use of dictionaries, thesauruses and a structured programme to support their spelling, including the use of the computer. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils plan and redraft written work including stories, drama scripts, narrative, poetry and letters. They make good use of computers to plan, draft and improve their work.
- 9 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above the level expected for their age. Pupils develop competence in the four rules of number. They manipulate numbers quickly in the daily mental mathematics session, which has a positive impact on their attainment. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils order numbers to 100 reliably and move on to numbers beyond 100. They set out their work

in a variety of ways including ways that relate to their mental work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above the level expected for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress and become increasingly proficient in all aspects of the number system. This includes work on all the number operations, odd and even numbers, place value, fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils particularly enjoy their work when it is practical; for example, they use formulae to work out the perimeter and area of different shapes. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their ability to solve mathematical problems and to be creative in the methods they use.

- 10 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in science is above the level expected for their age. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 developing their scientific knowledge and skills. They classify materials according to simple criteria and recognise that some changes to materials are reversible, such as ice changing into water. A good investigative lesson was seen to improve pupils' skills in experimenting with batteries, bulbs and wires to create simple circuits. The sense of excitement when it first worked showed how much pupils gained from the experience. Pupils conduct simple experiments with plants and recognise the need for heat, light and water as conditions for growth. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. This is evident in their experimental and investigative work. For example, in a Year 3 lesson they made their own thermometers with coloured water, plastic bottles and tubes and sealed the neck with plasticine. In discussions, they predicted that the water would move up the tube when heated. This experimental work is developed well in Year 6 when pupils compare the forces involved when testing to find out which objects float at a particular level in a jar containing treacle, oil and water. They understand the difficult concept that both objects and liquids have different densities that affect their movement. These practical lessons make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils make good progress in carrying out different investigations and understanding the conditions needed to make a test fair. Pupils enjoy these practical science sessions and they make a positive contribution to their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 11 By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in information technology that match those expected for their age. The school has made considerable improvements to its curriculum over the past three years. Information technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum. However, the use of information technology is inconsistent across the school and adversely affects the quality of what is achieved in the various strands of the subject, which include communicating and handling information, modelling, control and measuring. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and knowledge. They use their keyboard skills to produce short pieces of text on the screen, know how to use the mouse and understand the use of the cursor and of several of the screen icons when amending their work. In discussion, pupils in Year 2 identified ways in which they use technology to make objects, like the screen turtle, move and draw shapes.
- 12 Pupils in Key Stage 2 build effectively on their skills and knowledge. In discussions, pupils explained how to load and save their work. They are confident when using computers and understand how to bring up the various menus available, for example, when using text in an art program to make a 'Mother's Day' card. Pupils use computers to support their work in other subjects such as English and geography. For example, they use the digital camera to photograph houses and to support very good language work in a simulated argument about selling the school to build houses. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their understanding of the control and modelling aspects of information technology, their progress in improving their skills is

- limited by insufficient resources. The school is aware of this and has very good plans for the development of the subject.
- 13 By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in art, history and music is above the level expected for their age. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 matches that expected for their age in geography, design and technology and physical education. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above the level expected for their age in design and technology and physical education, it matches the level expected in geography.
- 14 In art, pupils learn to use tools and materials safely. They enjoy many opportunities to experiment with visual and tactile elements, such as colour, shape, form and modelling materials. Pupils in Year 2 have studied the work of Lowry and have then used his style to create 'matchstick' figures of their own displayed against a backdrop of the local area. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their early work on famous artists as they investigate the effects of light on water through the eyes of David Hockney. Stimulated by the reflection of light on a bowl of water portrayed through an overhead projector, pupils create their own ideas in tissue and felt tips as they mirror the ideas displayed in Hockney's pictures. In history, pupils in Key Stage 1 study the lives of people in the 20th century and have applied literacy skills well in Year 2 to compile a book about their own grandparents' memories of life in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use research skills very effectively to investigate life in Ancient Egypt and to compare many of the features with modern day Egypt. They research the influence of the river Nile on the life of the people in both ancient and modern times and then investigate the clothing, adornments, makeup and lifestyle of people in Ancient Egypt.
- 15 Music is used in both key stages to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing in unison both with and without accompaniment displaying appropriate command of pitch and rhythm. Pupils in Key Stage 2 read a simple score confidently and, when singing, build on their earlier experiences to very good effect as they echo the teacher to develop phrasing and timbre to a high level of competence. Pupils listen carefully and respond appropriately to recorded music. Music is used well to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding. In design and technology, pupils in Year 1 drew a snowman shape and planned how they would decorate him. They made choices about which materials to use to make the hat, scarf and nose. In a good link with literacy, pupils wrote a story about their snowman. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils design an Egyptian death mask and canopic jar to reflect their work on Ancient Egypt. Masks are made which accurately reflect the designs, with a focus on using a variety of materials and placing appropriate emphasis on the quality of the finished product.
- 16 In physical education, pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum through a good range of physical activities. All pupils are aerobically involved in the warm-up part of their lessons and they have a very good understanding of the relationship between exercise, health and fitness. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils responded well to music when interpreting their feelings, they ran in time to the music and changed to light, delicate movements when the music changed. In Key Stage 2, pupils have regular swimming lessons and the standard is very good. All pupils are knowledgeable about games and have a good level of overall fitness. In geography in Year 2, pupils walked the local area and described the different houses they saw on their route. In Year 6, pupils study other parts of the world and in a lesson on glaciers understood the main features and how they were formed. Pupils' attainment has improved in virtually every subject since the previous inspection, which is a commendable achievement considering all the recent pressures on schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 17 The school has successfully built on the good attitudes and behaviour pupils displayed during the previous inspection and they are now very good. Pupils' enthusiasm and their attitudes to school, during the inspection, were very good. This has a very positive impact on their learning.
- 18 Observations in lessons confirm the high degree of enthusiasm and very good behaviour of pupils, which are a strength of the school. In a very few lessons, in Key Stage 2, when teaching is insufficiently challenging, a small number of boys are inattentive and misbehave. Pupils are interested in all aspects of the curriculum and respond positively to the many opportunities provided for them by the school. For example, in a Year 6 art lesson with a local artist, they marvelled at pictures she had painted in the style of Monet and applied themselves creatively and diligently to their own Impressionist work. The attitude of children under five is also very good and the sensitive and caring way they are welcomed into the school community helps them to adjust to school life easily. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are very good. In their literacy and numeracy withdrawal groups, pupils are attentive to their teacher and are keen and eager to make progress. Pupils with special educational needs are wholly integrated into all aspects of school life and have positive relationships with their peers and adults. This very positive attitude shows the school is doing all it can to ensure it makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning and the good progress they make throughout their time in school.
- 19 Pupils' behaviour in the dining hall, around the school and in the playground is very good. Their courtesy to one another, and to adults, is quite exceptional and it is shown by pupils of all ages. Staff apply the school's policies on behaviour and bullying consistently. Pupils are fully aware of the school's high expectations of good behaviour and they respond accordingly. There have been no cases of exclusion, but appropriate systems are in place to deal with the exclusion process.
- 20 Relationships in the school are excellent. The positive interaction between teachers and pupils fosters and stimulates learning and enhances pupils' attainment. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, the rapport between teacher and pupils, and their resulting enthusiasm, led to very good progress in acquiring handwriting and dictionary skills and in understanding what they had learned. In Key Stage 2, pupils are increasingly confident and their personal development is guided by the provision of numerous opportunities for research and independent work, both at school and at home.
- 21 The excellent level of pupils' personal development and relationships is reflected in their ability to work both independently with minimal supervision and also co-operatively in pairs or groups. They have a very mature, confident and pleasant approach to school life and work. They anticipate what is to be done and do it sensibly. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from their years of training for responsibility in the way they carry out their many duties. They act as 'buddies' for the under-fives; they prepare the hall for assemblies and take leading roles with confidence; they extend their interests into the community by raising money for local, national and international charitable causes and through their involvement in local life and organisations. They respect other people's opinions, values and beliefs. They give appreciative credit to the achievements of others, particularly in assemblies, where there is a regular celebration of pupils' successes and sharing of interests. They treat the whole-school environment with great respect. There is a clear Christian dimension to all the school's activities.

- 22 The school has continued to improve pupils' rate of attendance, which is very good and well above the national average. There is very little lateness and registers and records are kept thoroughly, as required.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 23 The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons; it was good in 34 per cent and very good or better in a further 52 per cent of lessons. Despite two unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection, teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The headteacher is implementing the school's policy for monitoring and improving teaching and it is being used effectively to raise the quality of all teachers' performance. Teaching was consistently good and often very good for children under five. Teaching was good, often very good and occasionally excellent in both key stages. The quality of teaching throughout the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. The teaching of basic skills is very good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by very good teaching that provides challenging activities. The high expectations teachers have of pupils' behaviour and effort, the very well organised and managed lessons maintaining a brisk pace all make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of the teamwork by teachers, support staff and volunteers has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and the high standards they achieve in English, mathematics and science. All this shows clearly that the school is taking a serious approach to the maintenance and improvement of teaching.
- 24 The teaching of English is very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers' planning is clearly linked to the requirements of the Literacy Strategy. Teachers plan their lessons well and work is well-matched to individual pupils' needs. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher chose a poem 'The Giant's Accident' and pupils explained how the poem made them feel. The teacher maintained a very good pace in the lesson and used an 'ET' puppet to very good effect when asking probing questions about the poem. Pupils' relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom ensure that they achieve well. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils are challenged in lessons. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils rewrote a story with a message and the teacher used the example of Roald Dahl's problems with redrafting and the techniques he used in his writing. Pupils were confident when expressing ideas and sharing them with the whole-class because of the high quality relationships that encourage pupils to give of their best. Their very positive attitudes, high levels of concentration, eagerness to do well, very good behaviour and an ability to share ideas make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- 25 The teaching of mathematics is good and occasionally very good or excellent. Teachers effectively use the Numeracy Strategy and plan lessons that are challenging and interesting. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson; pupils used mental addition to count upwards in fives. They used a column of figures to colour in every fifth number and then used their knowledge to complete a worksheet that had an engine pulling carriages where they had to number each carriage in a sequence of fives. Most pupils were accurate with this task and were proud of their neat and tidy recording. Lessons are well-planned and teachers ensure that all pupils are actively engaged in lessons that challenge them. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson; the teacher used practical examples of bedrooms, homes and the resource room in school when calculating areas. Pupils made good progress in improving their mental agility, using addition, subtraction and multiplication when solving the problems set.

- 26 Teachers' expectations are very high and they expect the best of all pupils. They question pupils well and work is well-matched to the individual needs of the pupils. Pupils respond well to the challenge in lessons. In all year groups, pupils are encouraged to be independent as they work and they clearly understand that they have to get on with their task as the class teacher works with other groups. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils used dice to practise adding in fours by retaining the number in their head and adding on the next series. In the plenary session, pupils responded well to the challenge of counting backwards in nines from larger numbers such as 53. This mental mathematics has a very positive impact upon pupils' learning and their levels of self-esteem.
- 27 Teachers' planning is good in both key stages for most subjects. Teachers use the whole-class sessions effectively to involve pupils of all levels of attainment and to encourage individuals to participate fully. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson, good questions were used to encourage pupils to think about their practical experiment on forces and how the density of different objects is tested using a mixture of three different fluids. Planning is consistent for most subjects; for example, in science, teachers' medium-term planning shows the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught. As a result, pupils build effectively on their previous learning. Teachers work effectively with groups and individuals, helping to solve specific problems. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson; pupils were set the challenge of scanning dictionaries for words containing 'er', 'ur' and 'ir'. Pupils were given a time scale and most reached the target of ten words in five minutes. Teachers are very aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and make time to support them either individually or in small groups.
- 28 Teachers in both key stages know and manage their pupils very well and provide good support for different activities. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. In a Year 1 class, the teacher used language effectively and encouraged pupils to discuss their holiday activities during the recent half-term break. The quality of the discussion was very good because pupils felt at ease and knew their contributions would be valued. Teachers respond very well to the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs, and they intervene and offer encouragement as they move round the class supporting different activities. For example, teachers assess what pupils are learning in the lesson and make constructive suggestions as to how they can improve. This was particularly evident when a teacher was working with groups of pupils in a Year 2 history lesson improving their knowledge of historical items used in homes in the 19th and 20th centuries. Pupils used modern catalogues to find present day items that fill the same role today. This was a stimulating session and allowed the teacher to observe and assess pupils as the activity proceeded, adapting questions according to the needs of different pupils. Lessons are usually taught at a brisk pace. Teachers in both key stages use time efficiently and, in the best lessons, they make very clear to pupils the amount of time allocated to tasks. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson a clear target was set for pupils to experiment with wires, batteries and bulbs to construct a simple circuit. The brisk pace and good questioning by an adult volunteer ensured that pupils' interest and concentration were maintained throughout.
- 29 The procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress are good and used effectively to guide future planning. In their day-to-day work, teachers assess pupils' work well. They listen carefully and patiently and record their findings to help them plan future lessons. For example, in a Year 6 planning file for mathematics, the teacher noted the areas of difficulty for pupils and revised future plans to reinforce concepts not fully understood. Teachers effectively implement the homework policy.

They use it to support pupils' learning. There are opportunities for pupils of all ages to undertake homework and, in discussion with pupils, the majority are keen to complete the tasks given.

- 30 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and is particularly successful during literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They ensure that work is well-matched to individual ability levels and to the targets contained in individual education plans, pupils are set challenging tasks and activities and this is having a direct impact on the good progress made. All pupils work within the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Lessons are planned effectively, with tasks and activities for all ability levels. There is close teamwork between class teachers, support teachers and assistants and all staff are familiar with the information in the education plans for pupils in the class. They use this information well to plan appropriate work for pupils that meets their needs and enables them to make progress and maintain their motivation.
- 31 Pupils throughout the school are keen and interested in their lessons. They are enthusiastic learners who clearly enjoy coming to school and meeting the challenges provided for them by their teachers. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent and all pupils try hard and this is evident in their levels of achievement. Pupils show good levels of independence in their work and concentrate well on the tasks set for them. As a result, they make good progress throughout the school.

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

- 32 The school provides a good range of worthwhile opportunities within the curriculum, that are relevant to pupils' interests and aptitudes. The curriculum is well balanced and meets the statutory requirements to teach all the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Established national schemes of work are in place for most subjects and the school is awaiting the publication, in the very near future, of the few that remain to be implemented. This planning gives appropriate opportunities for pupils to make educational progress and meets all criteria set out in the last report. The school has devised systems whereby senior staff monitor and review the curricular opportunities regularly to ensure that they match the needs of pupils and that whole-school procedures are being followed properly by all teachers.
- 33 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The curriculum is organised effectively to meet the needs of all pupils with special educational needs. In literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils with special needs are withdrawn for small group teaching by very experienced and competent members of staff and, as a result, pupils make good progress. In classes, teachers plan lessons to take into account the ability levels of all pupils and suitable activities are chosen to ensure that pupils are fully involved. Pupils have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning by accurate and regularly reviewed education plans. Pupils are fully included in all extra-curricular and social activities organised by the school.
- 34 The school has very good strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The national strategies are embedded into the school curriculum and the standards of achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average in both English and mathematics. The skills gained by pupils in literacy and numeracy are reinforced successfully in other subject areas, particularly in history and science. The school provides very well for equal access to the curriculum through the very good management of withdrawal group work and the very good use of teaching and support

staff to further learning. These groups are carefully phased through different activities, to ensure they do not miss any important subject areas as a result of their withdrawal.

- 35 There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, as was found at the last inspection. There are football and netball clubs, a recorder club and line dancing. A French club is usually held during the summer term. In the interests of continuity, the school ensures that more than one member of staff is involved in each activity. These activities are well supported by pupils. There is a good variety of visits to places of interest, such as museums and theatres. These opportunities add breadth and value to pupils' learning and knowledge of the world.
- 36 The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school nurse makes a valuable contribution with talks on growing up, smoking awareness, general and dental hygiene and medicine safety. The school takes pains, when there are suitable opportunities, such as in science lessons, to emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and to encourage informed and healthy choices by pupils. Circle time is used well by the school and pupils react positively to the opportunities provided for them to discuss sensitive and pertinent matters as a group. They find the availability of 'feelings' boxes to be beneficial for more personal issues and to make sensitive suggestions.
- 37 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and has improved since the previous inspection to become a very strong feature, central to the work of the school. It makes a significant contribution to the stated aims of the school. Pupils receive many opportunities that lead them to become sensitive and considerate young people with a firm understanding of their role in society. The school provides an excellent ethos, which generates a happy, caring, supportive and Christian environment.
- 38 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is promoted thoughtfully through carefully planned opportunities in the curriculum and daily assemblies. Teachers or visiting leaders, such as the parish priest, take collective worship in a calm atmosphere. They make time for the tuneful singing of hymns such as 'This little light of mine' and for quiet prayer and reflection. In subjects such as English, music, art and religious education, teachers enable pupils to gain spiritual awareness through work and discussion. For instance, in a science lesson, younger pupils showed a sense of awe when a bulb sparked into life on completing an electric circuit. The oldest pupils expressed a mature reflective response on listening to the mood of Debussy's impressionist music. Teachers provide pupils with many very good opportunities to explore their inner feelings in quiet discussion. At the close of morning and afternoon sessions, teachers and pupils share a moment of prayer.
- 39 The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff provide a very strong moral code based on Christian values. They provide clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and take advantage of opportunities to make pupils aware of the difference between right and wrong. In some classes, pupils are involved in the making of class rules and clearly follow them by demonstrating very high standards of personal behaviour and honesty. There are many opportunities for staff to promote moral values by emphasising the importance of listening to others, abiding by rules, playing fairly and taking responsible decisions. Teachers encourage pupils, as they become older, to discuss wider moral and social issues such as conservation.
- 40 The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The excellent relationships in the school contribute strongly to pupils' very good attitudes to social behaviour and self-discipline. Staff are very good role models for promoting values such as courtesy

and respect for others. They encourage pupils to work together co-operatively and fairly in lessons in subjects such as science and physical education and to act on their own initiative. They create opportunities to guide pupils towards taking responsibility for themselves and for others. Staff are very successful in promoting pupils' enthusiasm for school. It is a very caring community where all pupils are valued. Consequently, pupils' self-esteem is very high.

- 41 The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Through careful curricular planning pupils are provided with many opportunities to learn of their own and other cultures in lessons such as art, history, geography, music, religious education and English. They study the works of the European artists Millais and Lowry and greatly benefit from the work of a local artist in residence. The school promotes music, dance and song, familiar and foreign. Pupils visit an art gallery and are entertained by a visiting theatre group. They learn Christian traditions and benefit from close links with the parish church. The school ensures that pupils gain an understanding of other cultures and faiths. They learn of Islam in lessons and from visiting high school students. They celebrate Diwali and are introduced to Indian and Islamic art.
- 42 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has grown in strength since the previous inspection. The school is well placed to maintain this provision.
- 43 The school has very good links with the local and wider community, which make a very supportive contribution to pupils' education. Contacts with the local church are particularly strong. Pupils take part in an annual Parish Walk and enjoy the Gala Day and St. George's Fun Day organised by the parents' association. The pupils sing in the church for special events and services and, at Christmas, all pupils take part in a major dramatic extravaganza depicting the story of the Nativity. The vicar regularly leads stimulating whole-school acts of collective worship and the local Autumn Club are invited to school services. Pupils have written to local councillors about recycling projects and a member of the council has visited the school to talk to pupils.
- 44 Mutual benefits have been derived from constructive relationships with partner institutions, especially the local secondary school. Annual induction days are arranged for pupils in Year 6 and ex-pupils from Year 7 talk to their peers in Year 6 about induction into the High Schools they will attend, prior to the start of the new school year. The school receives placements for work experience from its 'receiving' secondary schools. A joint service is held annually with the local High School for Education Sunday. There are effective links with the local nursery school and staff have introduced home visits prior to entry to the reception class in addition to visits to the school by parents and children. The school is well supported by the local education authority's advisory teacher centre, whose staff provide advice on curricular development, so enhancing teachers' knowledge and expertise.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 45 The previous inspection report stated that the school provides a caring and stable environment, where good relationships provide a secure base for children's learning and development. This is still evident and the school has done well to maintain this high level of consistency. The school is a very warm and caring community. Staff know all pupils very well and relationships are excellent.

- 46 The school has thorough procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment begins with baseline assessment in the reception class and is a regular part of teaching throughout the school, with particularly effective oral assessment used daily during plenary sessions. This oral assessment enables teachers to make quick, accurate judgements on how well pupils' knowledge and understanding have developed during the course of the lesson and helps teachers plan further learning opportunities, either to reinforce previous learning or to provide more challenging activities. More structured occasions for assessment are planned systematically, but are not always evident in teachers' weekly lesson plans. Progress is monitored well, through a variety of school-based subject and national tests. The results of these tests are carefully analysed by all staff and this systematic monitoring leads to changes or modifications in the organisation of classes or teaching groups. A future target is to monitor the attainment of boys and girls to track any significant differences. Teachers know individual pupils very well, and support them in their learning. The school uses a withdrawal system of teaching, to support pupils effectively and raise standards of achievement for all pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs meet the targets in their individual education plans effectively.
- 47 Teachers assess pupils in all aspects of their work, including pupils' personal and social development. These systems are informal, but are on going and effective and are founded on the excellent relationships which exist between staff and pupils. Pupils respect and trust their teachers and are willing to discuss problems with them related to either their work or relationships. Teachers plan activities in lessons to include opportunities for personal and social development; for example, pupils are encouraged to work and plan together and discuss their work with others. Many opportunities are given for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others, which they do sensitively. Pupils are encouraged to make choices, about both work and behaviour and to take responsibility for their actions: this has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to their work and standards of behaviour, which are very good throughout the school. Pupils are given meaningful jobs and responsibilities; for example, older pupils effectively support younger pupils at lunchtime and wet playtimes, and pupils in Year 6 prepare the hall for assembly.
- 48 The school has very good procedures in place for monitoring the behaviour of pupils. All staff apply the agreed policy on behaviour very effectively and consequently behaviour is consistently very good throughout the school. Pupils are consistently polite and helpful, whatever their age and this reflects the school's caring ethos, which is embedded in the day-to-day life of the school. The headteacher keeps a record of pupils who misbehave and involves parents in discussing ways of dealing with this. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection, but the school encourages pupils to tell teachers, or any member of staff, if an incident occurs and the headteacher monitors this rigorously.
- 49 Procedures for monitoring attendance and lateness are thoroughly applied by the headteacher. He monitors all registers weekly and records any absence or lateness patterns. Unexplained absences are followed up immediately, reflecting the school's high standards of care.
- 50 Pupils who have statements of special educational need are supported by effective, whole-school procedures, very good liaison with the school's special needs co-ordinator and effective links with outside specialist agencies. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in their daily learning and sensitive guidance on aspects of behaviour. The continual monitoring and analysis of pupils' progress ensure that individual education plans are regularly updated. During literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils are supported in class by the teacher or support assistants,

or taught in withdrawal groups if the school considers this is appropriate for their needs. All pupils with special needs receive equal opportunities in school and have access to a suitably broad and balanced curriculum.

- 51 The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced very clear guidance to staff on child protection matters, which are reviewed and updated regularly. Pupils' health and safety are well provided for and all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities. There are regular fire equipment tests and drills and first aid is well administered. First aid kits are exceptionally well maintained through the local pharmacy. Electrical safety is regularly checked and governors are involved with the regular health and safety audit and risk assessment. The school caretaker is fully involved in health and safety and he monitors compliance with no parking restrictions twice a day outside the school. The school's health and safety policy is regularly reviewed.
- 52 The school pays particular attention to pupils' pastoral care, particularly in Key Stage 1, and many instances occur where pupils' needs are sensitively addressed. For example, great care is consistently exercised with handover procedures at the end of the day and teachers minister to those pupils with medical needs without undue fuss. The school is kept very clean and close attention is paid to personal hygiene, especially in the reception class and Key Stage 1. These high standards of safety and care for its pupils are strengths of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 53 The school has maintained and consolidated the very good relationships with parents and carers which were evident at the last inspection. This has a valuable impact on many aspects of school life. Most parents have a very positive view of the school and a considerable number of parents and friends make a significant commitment to help in school on a regular basis. These volunteers play an essential role in the school's day-to-day work and the impact they have on the work of the school is excellent. The Friends' Association is very active and raises substantial extra funds, as well as providing a social focus for the school and the community.
- 54 There was a large response to the parental survey. A significant minority of parents expressed some disagreement about the sufficiency of homework provision and information about children's progress. The inspection found that there was no substance in the criticism of either of these areas and that the school's provision is good.
- 55 Since the last inspection, the quality and quantity of information supplied to parents have improved significantly. There are frequent newsletters, open evenings and curriculum workshops to keep parents and carers up to date with developments. They are well informed of the results of national tests and related issues. Pupils' annual reports are informative and highlight strengths and weaknesses, as required. The school also sends half yearly reports to parents. Parents are encouraged to speak to teachers informally about any concerns they may have and they feel welcome in the school. The school considers the parents to be vital partners in the assessment process for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are involved in the process of identification of needs and are kept fully informed of their children's progress at all stages. Pupils who have individual education plans have two reviews a year, and parents are invited and encouraged to take part in the reviews. Parents are actively encouraged to work in partnership with the class teacher to provide a continuity of

support. Parents are very supportive of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

- 56 Most parents have signed the Home School Agreement and they are supportive of their children's reading and homework. Many parents view children's learning at home very positively. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and consider they have a constructive partnership. These very good links make an important contribution to pupils' learning and attainment at the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 57 The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and give a clear educational direction for the school. They work well together to create a very good atmosphere where changes can be assimilated without detriment to the smooth running of the school or the standards attained by pupils. The quality of teamwork by all staff is very good and fosters an excellent ethos in the school where all pupils are valued and their efforts very well supported. Responsibilities for each aspect of the curriculum are appropriately delegated and teachers fulfil them well. Co-ordinators effectively monitor teaching and learning in their subject areas. The governing body is committed to helping the school move forward. Governors make a very good contribution to the effective running of the school and are committed to maintaining and raising standards further. The school leadership has responded effectively to the last inspection. The purpose of long-term, medium-term and short-term planning is clearly defined. Teaching staff have been provided with files containing learning objectives, level descriptions and key skills for each subject as an aid to more precise planning. The range of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual pupils has been considerably improved. The school has purchased a range of extension materials that are used by the more able pupils and those with special educational needs. Groups of pupils, both less and more able, have been identified and work is planned to provide individual programmes of study for all pupils.
- 58 The school development plan is now very good. The school accurately identifies priorities and funds are very well managed towards meeting them. This can be seen in the way the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. All staff and governors are involved in detailed discussions before setting the plan. The present plan incorporates areas of staffing, management, curriculum and buildings. The school has made satisfactory progress in reviewing the size of the reserve account. The finance committee regularly monitors the use of this account and money has been allocated to maintain the present level of staffing as well as financing an increase in the number of support staff compared with previous years. The governors have approved a number of improvement projects funded from the reserve account. The reserve account is still quite large: however, the governors have very good plans for its use, which includes a significant contribution to the building and equipping of a new classroom, further expenditure on resources for information technology and improving resources for children under five in the reception class.
- 59 There has been very good progress in improving the quality of education for children under five. This has included a strategy for raising standards and the reception teacher, appointed in September 1997, is having a very positive impact on children's attainment and learning. The teaching week has been restructured and the support of adult assistants and volunteer helpers is providing very good quality experiences for children. However, there is still a need to improve the resources available to further develop the opportunities for children under five to engage in independent learning both indoors and outside.

- 60 The school has made very good progress in the monitoring of the curriculum. The headteacher, senior management team and subject co-ordinators regularly monitor the teaching of subjects. Co-ordinators also monitor teachers' detailed planning and pupils' written work. Training needs of staff are recorded and their roles are clearly identified. Literacy, numeracy and science co-ordinators have planned and presented in-service training to their colleagues, which has improved the teaching of these subjects. Throughout the school, the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a very positive effect on pupils' learning as they move through the school. With their current level of involvement and commitment, the governors, in partnership with the headteacher and staff, are well placed to plan and implement further improvements.
- 61 There are policies and schemes of work, in various formats, for all subjects. Teachers use these well to guide their planning and ensure that pupils receive an appropriate breadth of curricular experiences that build on their previous learning. There is now a consistent approach to curricular planning and the assessment of pupils' progress and achievements is effective. All staff understand the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for these pupils is very good. The special needs co-ordinator is very well qualified, well respected by parents and provides good support to all staff on how to increase their skill in supporting special educational needs pupils and in the writing of individual education plans. There is a good number of experienced, qualified and capable support staff to assist in the teaching of pupils with special needs and they are used effectively to support pupils in their learning. The school fully complies with the current Code of Practice.
- 62 The school fulfils all legal requirements for special educational needs and the co-ordinator handles the work very efficiently and effectively. Good policies and procedures aimed at ensuring early identification and support are in place. Pupils are identified early in their school life and appropriate action is taken to provide clear, well-defined targets to help them overcome their difficulties. The register is well organised and up-to-date and any changes in the circumstances of pupils are noted and, if necessary, acted upon. Individual education plans are in place for those pupils who require them and parents are involved in the review of their children's progress. The school liaises very well with outside agencies when necessary. The support for pupils with special educational needs is effective, as a result, pupils make good progress.
- 63 An access ramp at the main entrance provides wheelchair access to the school. The school's policy of special educational needs makes it clear that the school is unable to meet the needs of the physically disabled, owing to the nature of the building, awkward access to some classrooms and the lack of lifts for upstairs access. The funds available to the school for special educational needs are used efficiently. Pupils with special needs receive a high priority within the school's budget, which makes extra provision from its own funds. Additional staff are employed as support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator is allocated time to carry out administrative duties.
- 64 All staff have a shared commitment to raising standards. Relationships are excellent and pupils feel secure and valued. A very positive ethos reflects the school's commitment to achieve the highest educational standards and equal opportunity for all pupils. All staff do their best and make a very positive contribution to the effective running of the school. The governors are knowledgeable, take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to improving the school building and maintaining standards in the school. They keep themselves very well informed. The good committee structure enables them to support the headteacher and meet their statutory responsibilities. There are link governors in place for literacy, numeracy and special

educational needs who visit the school regularly and effectively monitor the delivery of the curriculum. The chair of the governors works very closely with the headteacher and they meet regularly to discuss the school and its work. Governors are aware of the delays in dealing with on-going improvements to the school, for example, the connection of the lines to access the Internet. The school's aims are clearly expressed and have been collaboratively developed and agreed. As a result, governors have a clear picture of the work of the school.

- 65 The school has good procedures for the induction of new teachers or those working on a supply basis. As a result, they fit into the routines of the school well and the continuity of learning is maintained. The school has clear targets for improvements. For example, the school has identified the need to purchase new equipment and resources to improve pupils' attainment and progress in information technology. A very good link with the local High School is used to ensure that maintenance of the computers is effective and there are very good plans to use this school and its equipment for the future training of staff in the use of new technology.
- 66 Through the governors' determination to keep classes to a manageable size, the school employs sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the planned curriculum well. Teachers are all suitably qualified and there is a good balance of experience and expertise. They have a clear understanding of their roles and work very effectively as a team. They receive regular training to allow them to meet new national initiatives and to update their skills and knowledge. Educational support staff are very effectively deployed in classrooms. Their time and expertise is used efficiently and this is having a positive impact on the good progress made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Good job descriptions are in place and there are effective procedures for the induction of staff that are new to the school. Mid-day supervisory staff make a positive contribution to pupils' well being at lunchtime. Staff morale is high and reflects the strong team spirit that is evident in the school.
- 67 The school's accommodation is unsatisfactory because of the small classrooms. However, the high quality of teaching overcomes the potentially limiting factor of cramped conditions in some classrooms and therefore pupils' attainment is not adversely affected. For physical education, accommodation is satisfactory indoors, but good outdoors. For the under fives the lack of a safe surface and a very small area restricts access to, and the availability of, appropriate outdoor play. Access for the disabled is satisfactory at the main entrance, but not possible upstairs. The school is immaculately kept by the caretaker and staff. Attractive displays and a well-maintained, clean environment help give the school a bright and welcoming atmosphere.
- 68 Resources for learning remain at a satisfactory level and are good for English, music and art. Provision for information technology has improved and is now satisfactory, except for the lack of sensing equipment. Resources for the under-fives are adequate, except for outdoor play, where they are unsatisfactory. Displays of pupils' work are used effectively to celebrate achievement, raise pupils' self-esteem and support personal development. Resources for all curriculum areas are stored as appropriately as possible in a school with restricted space and they are easily accessible to pupils. They are used effectively in classrooms to extend and develop pupils' skills and knowledge.
- 69 The efficiency of the school is good. Financial planning and control are good; the governing body has a finance committee which, together with the headteacher and administrative officer, monitors the school budget very well. The headteacher

effectively exercises day-to-day financial control within agreed limits. The finance committee discusses the school's budget proposals and the full governing body meets to examine and approve the full budget recommendations, linking spending to the priorities laid down in the school development plan. Governors are very committed to maintaining standards and monitoring the effect of recent initiatives. For example, the introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies has been monitored by the headteacher and the appropriate co-ordinators and reports on their success submitted to the governors to ensure the school receives good value for money from the spending on resources. The principles of best value are applied effectively when making financial decisions.

- 70 The day-to-day administration of the school is very good. The secretary has a good knowledge and understanding of both the school's and local authority's systems, which makes a positive contribution to the smooth and efficient running of the school. All points raised at the last audit have been addressed. Specific grants are used very effectively for their designated purpose and money allocated for the support of pupils with special educational needs is directed towards meeting their needs. Staff use their professional expertise and time well to support one another and to help the school to improve. Staff make good use of resources and accommodation. Curriculum co-ordinators have carried out audits of their subjects, have prioritised the buying of resources and monitor the effectiveness of their use in maintaining standards.
- 71 The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and senior management team are very good. The governing body is very effectively fulfilling its responsibilities. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are good. The finance and administrative procedures are efficient. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is well above the national average in English, mathematics and science and the trend over time is above the improving national trend. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain standards that are high when compared to their abilities. Specific grants are used well for their designated purpose. It costs slightly less to educate each pupil than is the case nationally: as a result the school provides very good value for money and is well placed to continue the improvements made since the last inspection and implement future initiatives.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72 In order to further improve the quality of education, standards and progress in the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

A. Improve further pupils' standards of attainment in information technology by:

- implementing the action plan they have already drawn up to improve the information technology resources and provide staff with training;
- using information technology more regularly to support teaching and learning in other subjects, particularly mathematics and science, so that pupils apply the skills they are learning on a more regular basis.

(Paragraphs 12, 68, 98, 104, 127, 129, 131)

B. Further extend opportunities for children under five for independent learning by:

- providing suitable resources for children under five to have more regular access to practical activities using sand, water and play equipment, both inside and outside the classroom;
- providing an attractive book corner where children have the space to handle books and so further increase their opportunities for independent learning.

(Paragraphs 59, 67, 74, 79, 83)

73 In addition to the key issues above, governors should consider the following issues as part of the action plan.

Ensure that the very good plans for the use of the reserve fund are fully implemented.
(Paragraph 58)

Further develop the sharing of the very good practice evident in most teaching to ensure consistency of high quality teaching and learning throughout the school.

(Paragraphs 23, 90, 103, 121)

The school has identified these issues in its own priorities and has a good action plan in place to address these matters.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	42	34	10	3	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)		237
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		55

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	14	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	19
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	29	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (80)	83%(88)	89(91)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	19
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	30	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81(85)	89(91)	89(94)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	18	14	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	29	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (60)	88 (50)	91(78)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	15	14
	Girls	13	13	12
	Total	26	28	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (72)	88 (63)	81 (66)
	National	68(65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – Afro heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	203
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	333,806
Total expenditure	351,735
Expenditure per pupil	1,491
Balance brought forward from previous year	77,885
Balance carried forward to next year	59,956

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

239

Number of questionnaires returned

148 (61.9%)

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 My child likes school	63	35	2	0	0
2 My child is making good progress in school	49	47	3	0	1
3 Behaviour in the school is good	54	44	1	0	1
4 My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	28	45	21	4	2
5 The teaching is good	56	42	1	0	1
6 I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	30	48	20	1	1
7 I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	64	34	2	0	0
8 The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	61	36	0	0	3
9 The school works closely with parents	41	48	9	1	1
10 The school is well led and managed	72	28	0	0	0
11 The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	54	44	1	0	1
12 The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	22	39	16	4	20

NB: figures are rounded to nearest integer; sum may not = 100%

16 (11%) parents made additional comments.

Strongest points in order:

- The school is welcoming, has a good atmosphere and has the interests of children to heart.
- Setting of homework is inconsistent.
- Not enough information is provided about the work and progress of children.

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

- 74 Education for children under five is provided in one reception classroom. The children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection approximately 50 per cent of the children in the reception class were under the age of five. The curriculum is appropriate for the needs of children under five but accommodation in the reception class restricts access to the activities which staff would wish to provide in order to effectively consolidate learning. There has been a very significant and marked improvement in curricular provision since the last inspection. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team promoting high educational standards. The curriculum is well-planned and provides a broad and balanced programme of learning experiences suitable for children under five. Children learn through appropriate teacher-directed activities, but there is not always sufficient resources for structured play activities in order that children may make choices for themselves and develop independence in their learning. Children are consequently not always able to develop exploratory and investigative play appropriately and to practise and consolidate their skills. The school has made good progress towards addressing these issues from the 1996 report but further changes need to be made, particularly in the provision of resources which will enable children to make choices for themselves and develop and practise their skills. Children are unable to make use of the secure playground to enjoy wheeled toys, to explore co-operative play and to develop their gross motor skills because of a lack of equipment and the absence of a safe surface for climbing apparatus. This inhibits their progress in this area of learning.
- 75 The personal and social development of children under five is very good and is a strength of the provision. The reception class is a place where children feel happy and secure in a very caring atmosphere. Children enter the reception class with a wide variation in experience. They make very good progress in this area of learning, developing self-confidence as they learn to understand and comply with the routines of the school. Children are friendly, assured and very well behaved at all times. They listen very well to staff and follow the rules; for example, if it is necessary for them to wait for their turn, they do so with no hint of disgruntlement or rancour. All children are very quiet and respectful during times of prayer and show high levels of reverence. They respond very positively to their experiences at school, forming amicable relationships with their peers and sharing in their achievements with a real pride. All children take responsibility for fastening their own coats for outside play and on entry to school, when they hang up their coats and put away their belongings confidently and efficiently with help from pupils from Year 6. They converse freely during social activities, for example, in the dining hall, and they co-operate with one another very well during computer activities taking turns and helping one another very effectively. Children learn to dress and undress for physical education and to fold their own clothes carefully. At lunchtime, children who bring sandwiches to school or have school meals sit quietly and responsibly, behave very politely, asking for help when needed and showing independence whenever possible.
- 76 Staff place a great emphasis on the development of the skills of speaking and listening and children make very good progress in these areas. They listen carefully to their teachers and to one another, they follow instructions and they enjoy stories and rhymes. They listen attentively to stories and offer opinions about characters

predicting what may happen next and relating to their own experiences. Staff use questions very skilfully to extend both the children's understanding and their use of language during whole-class discussion and in the many activities on offer. They work very supportively alongside the children in role-play to develop language skills through conversation in the setting. Children develop early language skills very effectively and by the time they are five their achievements in speaking and listening are above what is expected for children of this age. Children show great enjoyment and interest in stories and in books and, by the time they are five years old, several children are good readers and they write well for their age. They take books home regularly to share with parents and this is raising attainment. There is no comfortable and attractive book area where children can sit quietly and enjoy books for themselves but writing is now well developed through the use of a writing corner and its inclusion in role-play whenever appropriate. Children have a good understanding of initial letter phonics and higher attainers write well-structured short sentences, some with an appropriate use of capital letters and full stops. Letter formation is generally good; most letters are correctly formed and relatively even.

- 77 Children attain levels in mathematics which are similar to those of most five-year-olds. Children make satisfactory progress in mathematical skills in the reception class. The teaching of mathematics is good. The teacher has very secure subject knowledge and provides work that challenges the most able pupils very effectively. Skills and understanding are developed through sorting and matching activities, weighing activities, using shape, position, size and quantity and through songs and rhymes. Children count to ten with confidence. A minority of children can add and take away by counting forward and backwards and higher attainers order numeral correctly without assistance. The majority of children place themselves correctly in order in a line in first, second, third or fourth position. More able children add and subtract mentally up to 10 and understand and use a wide variety of mathematical language in their use of number.
- 78 Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developed well and they attain levels that are at least similar to, and often better than, those of children of their age. Opportunities are provided for children to develop technological skills through their use of construction toys during play activities with both large and small apparatus. In science investigations they test for friction as they decide which vehicle will travel most readily down a ramp and they separate a range of objects into categories for floating and sinking and then test their predictions. Children make good progress in this area of learning because of good teaching. Children explore the texture and properties of butter, flour, sugar and milk as they mix, roll and shape to make biscuits. The teacher organises good first hand experiences that enrich pupils' experiences. For example, they develop geographical and historical skills as they walk around the locality to investigate features of the landscape and changes in housing as new windows and doors replace the old. All children recently enjoyed a visit to the airport where they observed different forms of transport in the 'real world' as they noted the events in a busy airport. As they become more familiar with computers, children under five develop early skills with the mouse and they all draw and match pictures, print out their work and then laminate 'identity cards' for use in the submarine role-play area.
- 79 Children's physical development is satisfactory for their age. They make use of the secure playground: however, they are unable to use wheeled toys for independent or co-operative play to develop their skills because of a lack of equipment and the absence of a safe surface for climbing apparatus. This inhibits their progress. Children enjoy taking part in physical education lessons, use space well with good avoidance techniques and they move confidently and imaginatively. Most children show appropriate levels of co-ordination and balance as they move effectively to

music and form different shapes with their bodies. Many children run, skip and jump confidently showing a good use of space and a good awareness of the proximity of others. Ball skills are appropriately developed and the majority of children throw and catch a ball or beanbag and many bounce a ball effectively to return the ball to their partner.

- 80 Handling skills are developed well and children make good progress in the skills of cutting, gluing, drawing and colouring. Many children use scissors with a high level of competence and a few cut out quite complex pictures, for example from old catalogues or magazines. They manipulate a mouse with a high degree of accuracy in information technology and by the time they are five years old most draw a computer generated picture of their choice.
- 81 Children's creative and artistic skills develop well and are evident in the attractive displays of work, imaginative paintings about underwater life and snowman paintings illustrating the Raymond Briggs story. Children attain levels in most areas of creative work which are typical for their age. Their musical accomplishments and their three-dimensional art work is of a particularly high quality. Children engage in collage, wax resistant paintings and printing and they enjoy creating their own individual effects with a range of textures, tones and shades. The work in clay, after the style of Henry Moore, which children produce is of a very high quality. Children use paints, crayons, pastels, chalks and pencils well, creating their own self-portraits and their own representations of what they see around them. They use mirrors very effectively to explore their own features and look with care at different skin colours as they try hard to match these with crayons.
- 82 Musical expertise is developed very well as children learn to play untuned percussion instruments with good levels of control and confidence, copying fast and slow tempo effectively and experimenting with a range of instruments. Music plays an important part in learning for children under five and they benefit from very good teaching. They experience music from a wide range of cultures. During the week of the inspection, they enjoyed reggae music as they settled into class and waited for friends to join the group.
- 83 Teaching of the under fives is never less than good and often very good. Teaching of personal and social skills is very good with a consistent approach that enables children to understand the behaviour that is expected. All staff act as excellent role models and the children learn very well from their example. The teaching of language and literacy for children under five has many strengths, particularly in the Literacy Hour. This teaching is of a very high quality. It is very well structured and very well-matched to the needs of young children with a very clear and specific teaching of the basic skills of literacy. This shows a very great improvement in the teaching of language and literacy since the last inspection. The teacher has a good knowledge of the children and work offered is well-matched to their requirements. Planning is now matched effectively to the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five and to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This has met the needs of the last report but there are still too few resources to fully meet the requirements of all the areas of learning. There are effective links with the local nursery school and staff have introduced home visits prior to entry to the reception class in addition to visits to the school by parents and children. Parents are now involved very effectively in their children's learning and all assessment is now used very effectively to inform planning. There has been a very marked improvement in the provision for children under five since the previous inspection.

ENGLISH

- 84 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is above the level expected for their age in reading and writing. Pupils' attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests in reading and writing was close to the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was well above the national average. When compared to the results in similar schools, pupils' performance in reading and writing was below average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was broadly in line with similar schools in reading and above average in writing. Within this particular cohort of pupils, twenty five per cent were on the school's special educational needs register; consequently, this makes comparisons with similar schools less significant. Between 1996 and 1999, the pupils' performances in reading and writing tests were close to the national averages and during the same period, there was no significant difference in the level of attainment between boys and girls.
- 85 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English is well above the level expected for their age. The results of the 1999 tests for Key Stage 2 pupils were well above the national average and well above the average when compared to similar schools. The trend of pupils' attainment since 1996 is above the improving national trend. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs meet the targets set out in their individual education plans and are making good progress. This is a direct result of the school's careful assessment of their needs and the quality of support given to meet those needs. Standards in literacy are high and well implemented in other subjects of the curriculum, such as history, science and geography, where speaking and listening skills in particular are well promoted.
- 86 The school has set challenging but achievable targets for raising standards in English in the next two years and the school is well placed to meet these targets. Standards in English have improved since the last inspection, particularly in speaking and listening and writing skills. The school's capacity to improve further is good because of high quality leadership and commitment to improving standards by all staff.
- 87 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2, it is well above the average and reflects the good progress made throughout the school. In Year 1, pupils were confident when discussing holiday activities after the recent half-term break. In Year 2, pupils use good vocabulary skills to talk about a poem during literacy lessons. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and talk with other pupils as they make up lines of a shared class poem, or talk about the start to a story. In Key Stage 2, pupils build upon their skills; for example, in Year 3, pupils discuss the characters in the 'Vinegar Bottle' story and are confident when reading parts of a story to the rest of the class. In Year 4, pupils choose good adjectives when describing a Van Gogh picture. In Years 5 and 6, pupils make very good progress as they give an oral description of characters from Greek myths and legends and discuss poetry using extended vocabulary, such as alliteration, onomatopoeia, simile and metaphor. Pupils display very good knowledge and understanding as they talk about the impact that poetry can make upon the feelings and emotions of the reader. Very good progress is also made in personal, social and moral development as pupils discuss their likes and dislikes of poetry and literature in pairs and groups.
- 88 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading is good with the majority of seven-year-olds attaining standards that are above average. Pupils enjoy shared reading activities during the Literacy Hour and join in with enthusiasm when reading stories and poems. Older pupils skim and scan texts confidently and display good

reading skills when completing comprehension exercises. When reading independently, higher attaining pupils read accurately and fluently and convey the meaning of the story well. Pupils of average attainment identify the author and illustrator of a book and use good strategies to decode unfamiliar words. Below average attainers and pupils with special educational needs are confident when talking about their reading books. They read with hesitation and are less confident, but have the strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is well above the level expected for their age, the majority show understanding of a wide range of texts and discuss genre, story structure and the impact of key words in poetry. When reading independently, pupils in Year 3 talk about the plot, main characters and favourite parts of a story. By Year 6, pupils identify their favourite genre and read fluently with expression. The majority of pupils enjoy reading and are members of the local library. They refer to their reading diaries when talking about their favourite books and use a simple form of recording and assessment to record books that are particular favourites. Some pupils are not very confident when using the school non-fiction library. Although older pupils can talk confidently about the library, they are not always fully aware of the Dewey catalogue system or how the new colour coding system works. The school promotes reading well and, as a result, pupils make good progress and become skilful readers.

- 89 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is above the level expected for their age. Pupils build upon their knowledge and skills throughout Key Stage 2 and by the age of eleven, attainment in writing is well above the level expected for their age. In Key Stage 1, progress is good, particularly in punctuation skills and in developing strategies for spelling. Pupils are encouraged to become independent writers from an early age, with a clear focus placed upon good handwriting skills and neat presentation. In Year 1, pupils write simple letters, compile lists, complete word puzzles and write a simple book review about Roald Dahl's 'The Enormous Crocodile'. In Year 2, when writing about the Chinese New Year, pupils use imaginative expressions; for example, 'the lion and dragon are very colourful and they roar and shake their heads to frighten away any bad luck'. Pupils are confident in their use of dictionaries and use the word-walls in the classrooms to help them when spelling new words. Pupils make very good progress in their writing skills in Key Stage 2. In Year 3, pupils use a writing frame to plot a story and, in their stories of 'The Magic Key', show a good standard of handwriting and punctuation. In Year 4, they develop poetry skills in their poems on conservation; for example, 'Dirty tankers, sail the ocean, spilling oil, a deadly potion'. Pupils in Year 5, recognise incorrect spelling in a piece of text, show a good understanding of possessive pronouns and use negative prefixes in their writing. They make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of grammatical structure and spelling strategies. In Year 6, pupils with above average ability use metaphor and simile correctly in their writing and explain clearly what the terms mean. All pupils in Year 6 write balanced arguments, for example, for and against school homework. In diaries they use first person, past tense and personal conversation styles in their writing. Throughout the school, pupils make good use of computers to develop their spelling and to plan, draft and edit their work.
- 90 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is usually very good and often excellent. In Key Stage 2, the majority of teaching is very good or excellent and only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. All teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Literacy Hour and plan lessons well to cater for the needs of pupils with different ability levels. Teachers know their pupils well and use assessment effectively to probe pupils' knowledge and understanding during the plenary sessions. In very good and excellent lessons, pupils are inspired by the enthusiasm of their teachers. Relationships are excellent and pupils and activities are managed effectively to ensure that pupils concentrate on their work and make good progress in their lessons. On the

very rare occasion where teaching is less than satisfactory, pupils are not always managed well and this disrupts the orderly atmosphere of the classroom. Pupils' attention is sometimes allowed to wander and the teacher's expectations are not high enough: as a result, progress is not always satisfactory. All teachers use homework effectively to reinforce classroom activities. Support assistants and parent helpers are used well to provide individual or group support where necessary. Teachers know the individual strengths and weaknesses of their pupils very well and use accurate assessments to provide extension activities for the more able, or supportive teaching for the less able. In the majority of lessons, pupils make good and often very good progress in their English development due to the high expectations of their teachers and the positive way pupils are supported in their learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons, respond well to their teachers and behaviour in most classes is very good.

- 91 Literacy is encouraged across the curriculum and very few opportunities are missed to develop pupils' knowledge of words, language and reading skills, particularly in subjects such as science, history and music. The curriculum co-ordinator provides good leadership and is well informed and enthusiastic. Staff are well trained in the implementation of the Literacy Hour, making them confident and competent. Procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' work are thorough. The co-ordinator liaises effectively with the assessment co-ordinator to monitor and analyse test results and set future targets for development. A future target is to monitor the differences in attainment between boys and girls to track any significant differences. There is a very positive ethos for the subject in school and the subject policy ensures that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum, well-matched to their individual needs. Resources for the teaching of English are good but, owing to the cramped nature of the school's accommodation, the library is not used effectively to develop library skills throughout the school. However, the school uses books well in classrooms and makes the best possible use of the library in the present circumstances.

MATHEMATICS

- 92 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for mathematics, pupils' attainment was above the national average. The proportion reaching a higher level was close to the national average. When the school's performance for 1999 is compared with similar schools, the results in Key Stage 1 are close to the average for these schools, although below the average at the higher level. Over time the results are above the rising national trend. Girls are achieving slightly better than boys. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is well above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 mathematics tests, pupils' attainment was well above the national average. The proportion reaching the higher level was above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were above the average for these schools, although average at the higher level. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is well above the rising national trend. During the last two years boys and girls have achieved similar results. The school has done well to improve standards since the previous inspection and is setting realistic targets to improve further. By the time pupils are eleven years old they have made very good progress from entry at the age of four, in the development of their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 93 Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a good understanding of number and shape, space and measures. In Year 1, pupils use their knowledge of counting in fives to build on their understanding of pattern. They recognise that if a number does not end in 5 or 0 it is not part of the pattern. Pupils in Year 2 add quickly to this knowledge and learn to

chant in fives with confidence and enjoyment from a small number forwards and backwards to 100. They read and match accurately figures and words up to 100. They name two and three-dimensional shapes and most understand their properties. Pupils estimate length then use their hand spans to measure. Higher and average attaining pupils work more quickly and confidently than lower attainers and at a higher level. For instance, they measure in centimetres with reasonable accuracy. They convert pence into pounds. The highest attainers investigate the patterns of odd and even numbers with three dice and solve money problems involving pounds and pence. In investigations with time, they estimate time taken and then measure with a stopwatch. Lower attainers normally work at tasks set at an appropriate level. They write their own number statements such as $10 + 8 = 18$. They understand the hour of 'o'clock'. Sometimes, however, when they work at the same level as others, they make little progress with the concept when, for instance, converting pence into pounds and working with hundreds, tens and units in place value.

- 94 Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress and become increasingly proficient in all aspects of mathematics. This includes work in number, shape, space and measures and handling data. For example, in Year 3, pupils have good knowledge of number bonds and higher attainers explain pattern in numbers in detail and how they arrive at an answer. In Year 4, pupils develop their previous understanding of position and direction, using the eight points of the compass. They describe routes using co-ordinates and work out travel along grid lines. Pupils in Year 5 make very good and sometimes excellent progress in lessons. They collect and organise data and draw line graphs, then interpret them to convert pounds sterling to lira. They place mixed fractions and positive and negative numbers in correct order in a sequence. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils confidently calculate the area of compound shapes by formula. They use negative numbers in the context of temperature above and below freezing point. They explore number patterns and relationships using multiple, factor and square. They discuss events with two or more likely outcomes and place each probability on a scale from 0 to 1 or impossible to ascertain. Pupils multiply and divide large numbers using various strategies. Higher attainers have a very good understanding of equivalent fractions and decimal and percentage equivalence.
- 95 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are taught in withdrawal groups by a support teacher and staff who liaise closely with class teachers. This ensures a match of work at the appropriate level and offers a good challenge. Through very good provision and strong teaching, the attainment of many of these pupils reaches the expectations for their age. Those in Year 5 have a satisfactory understanding of negative numbers and place value but they are less certain when multiplying by 100. Pupils in Year 6 know how to find perimeter and area by formula and are beginning to understand the process of multiplication using larger numbers.
- 96 The quality of teaching is good, often very good and sometimes excellent in both key stages. This high quality teaching has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and progress. There are excellent relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff. This leads to pupils feeling confident when offering the suggestions and explanations which teachers encourage, without fear of being wrong. Teachers encourage pupils to enjoy mathematics with lively presentations, interesting activities and good humoured interaction. Most teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this to ask probing and challenging questions to promote mathematical thinking. The teaching of the basic skills is very good in both key stages. Regular practice following the National Numeracy Strategy leads to high quality learning by pupils because they know and respond well to the routines. The

success of developing knowledge and fast recall in mental sessions and consolidating and sharing learning in plenary sessions, contribute considerably to the school's rising standards. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. Pupils respond very positively.

- 97 Teachers set tasks that challenge pupils of all abilities and use a range of methods very effectively in lessons, giving good support to individuals and groups according to the needs of the task. They conduct lessons at a brisk pace so that pupils usually complete tasks in the time allotted. Teachers organise and prepare thoroughly for lessons and give pupils clear ideas of what they are going to learn and do. They make good use of homework and this makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Every opportunity is taken to link the subject to other parts of the curriculum, so that pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and skills. Teachers know their pupils well. They mark work regularly and ensure that pupils' work is neat and well presented. They make regular assessments of their attainment and progress and use the results to plan future learning and to set new targets.
- 98 The mathematics curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting. All teachers are fully trained for the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been successfully implemented. Every opportunity is taken to link the subject to other parts of the curriculum, so that pupils apply their knowledge and skills, particularly in literacy and science. Teachers develop pupils' use of correct mathematical vocabulary by example and require them to use it in their explanations. In science, teachers use tables, charts and graphs to tabulate results. However, information technology is not used consistently to support and extend the mathematics curriculum. The co-ordinator and headteacher monitor teachers' planning and also teaching and learning in the classroom to ensure that standards remain high. The school analyses the results of annual tests to look for strengths and weaknesses. The senior management team recognises the need to analyse results further for any differences in the learning of boys and girls.
- 99 The school has moved forward considerably since the previous inspection, when attainment was in line with national expectations. Attainment of seven-year-olds is now above the national average and well above for eleven-year-olds. The school continues to work hard to raise pupils' attainment and is well placed to maintain its momentum.

SCIENCE

- 100 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in science is above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 teacher assessment in science, pupils' attainment was close to the national average. The proportion attaining the higher level was above the national average. When the school's performance in 1999 is compared with similar schools, the results in Key Stage 1 are close to the average. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in science is well above the level expected for their age. In the 1999 National Curriculum science tests, pupils' attainment was above the national average. The proportion reaching the higher level was also above the average. When compared with similar schools, the school's results were close to the average for these schools. The results in the tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, are a credit to the school when over 25 five per cent were on the school's special educational needs register. The trend of pupils' attainment over time is broadly above the improving national trend. The school has done all it can to improve standards since the previous inspection and is setting realistic targets to improve further.

- 101 Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 in developing their scientific knowledge and skills. They classify materials according to simple criteria; for example, they know which materials are suitable to wear in wet weather because they are waterproof. This work is developed well when pupils recognise that some changes made by heating and cooling are reversible as for example, with ice and chocolate. In discussions, they know that it is impossible to change an egg back after cooking. Pupils in Year 1 showed care for the environment in a lesson on plant growth. They appreciated the need to handle plants carefully and they looked forward to the conclusion to their planting by hoping that the cress, sunflowers and poppies would grow successfully. Pupils conduct their simple experiments with plants successfully and recognise the need for heat, light and water as conditions for growth. They experiment with simple circuits and, in discussion, understand that the switch can break the circuit and turn a light off or make a circuit and turn it back on again.
- 102 Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in their experimental and investigative work. For example, in a Year 3 lesson; they explained clearly what they were doing when making a thermometer using coloured water, plastic bottles and plastic tubes. They predicted what would happen to the water in the tube when heated or cooled. Key factors in the success of the lesson were the pupils' very good behaviour, use of initiative and ability to work enthusiastically in small groups, co-operating well together. This experimental work is developed well in Year 5 when pupils organise their own experiments on evaporation and condensation. Pupils set their own questions and devise an experiment to answer their initial hypotheses. For example, one group decided that they would use different sized plates to see if the surface area affected the speed of evaporation. They explained the importance of having the same amount of water in each container to make the test fair. Pupils make good progress in carrying out different investigations and understand the conditions needed to make a test fair. A further example of this was in a Year 6 lesson when pupils experimented to find the density of different objects by testing how far each one sank in three different liquids. Pupils gave good ideas, suggested keeping all aspects the same and only changing the object being tested. Pupils enjoy these practical science sessions, which make a positive contribution to their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 103 The quality of teaching in science is good and often very good in both key stages and is having a positive effect on pupils' motivation and their current progress. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen in science, when a minority of pupils disrupted the lesson and pupils' progress was adversely affected. There are excellent relationships between pupils, teachers and adult support staff, which mean that pupils feel confident when offering suggestions and explanations in whole-class sessions. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this to ask challenging questions. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on density, the teacher introduced the session with quick fire questions to revise the pupils' previous knowledge. A very good teacher-prepared worksheet was then used to see how well pupils understood the difficult concepts involved in balanced and unbalanced forces. The teaching of the basic skills for investigative and experimental work is very good throughout the school. Regular lessons reinforce pupils' abilities to predict, observe closely and record their findings in their own way. This was shown in examples of work in all year groups when written descriptions, charts or graphs were used very well to show the results of particular experiments.
- 104 Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who respond well, and whose very good attitudes and behaviour have a positive impact on their learning. Teachers set tasks that challenge pupils of all abilities and use a good range of methods, which leads to interesting lessons that motivate pupils to do their best. For example, in written work

in pupils' books there is a good range of scientific work covering all aspects of the science curriculum. Pupils record graphs of classmates' favourite foods, they understand the concept of healthy eating, are aware of the needs of plants and record, in their own way, experiments conducted on circuits and electricity. Teachers organise and prepare effectively for their lessons. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils effectively when asking questions. This means that pupils with special educational needs throughout the school are equally well challenged and, as a result, they make good progress. Homework is given regularly and this contributes effectively to pupils' learning. Teachers are very explicit with pupils about the aims of lessons and the targets for what is to be learned. However, information technology is not used consistently to support and extend the science curriculum.

- 105 The science curriculum is well organised and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Every opportunity is taken, when appropriate, to link science to other subjects so that pupils apply their scientific knowledge and skills. A very good example is pupils recording their findings in graphs, which improves their mathematical skills. The subject is very well managed and monitored by the enthusiastic co-ordinator. Teachers' planning and the scrutiny of pupils' work form an important part of the monitoring system. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and very effective displays enhance pupils' self esteem. Visits both locally and further afield make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and the use of the wildlife area, particularly in the summer, adds to pupils' experiences.

ART

- 106 Pupils' attainment, in both key stages, is above that expected for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were similar to those of most pupils. From evidence seen in lessons, looking at pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils, good progress is made throughout the school. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Much of this progress can be attributed to the dedicated, skilled and enthusiastic support given to teachers by a local artist working in the school and alongside the pupils.
- 107 Pupils in Key Stage 1 work with a variety of media, including paint, collage, pencil, papier mâché and clay. Pupils in Year 2 study the work of Lowry and then use his style to create 'matchstick' figures of their own displayed against a backdrop of the local area. They investigate the carvings on a door from Africa and then attempt to imitate the effect using geometric patterns in crayon and then mount clay figures on to their patterns. When arranged to create the overall aim of the original, the effect is stunning. This work is of a high quality for pupils of this age. There is a clear progression in collage work. Children in reception are seen to collaborate to explore the properties of glue and paint, whereas pupils in Year 6 consider elements in shape and pattern using different qualities of line as they build up a collage, filling space by layering and overlapping.
- 108 In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their early work on famous artists as they investigate the effects of light on water through the eyes of David Hockney. Stimulated by the reflection of light on a bowl of water portrayed through an overhead projector, pupils create their own ideas in tissue and felt tips as they mirror the ideas displayed in Hockney's pictures. They extend Hockney's ideas as they use pictures of their own families and favourite artefacts to create pictures of their own version of 'Mr and Mrs Clarke and Percy'. This is further developed in Year 4 where pupils study the works of Monet and Van Gogh. They divided a picture into small segments and made a detailed study of the lines and strokes contained within each segment and applied the

landscape style of Monet to their own creative watercolours of the landscape around the school. The work produced by pupils in Year 5 is of a very high standard. They centred their work on a study of 'heads'. They worked in groups over a long period to build up a very detailed collage of heads cut from magazines to create a large head. They used an African mask and a teacher-made 'ghost mask' as inspiration to create their own masks and heads out of modroc. They study the work of Elisabeth Frink to create exceedingly high quality 'Goggleheads' in clay. The attention to detail in, for example, ears and nose, is quite remarkable for pupils of this age. In Year 6, pupils work in pastels to produce good quality still life drawings of harvest fruit.

- 109 The quality of teaching in art is very good. Where teachers have the necessary knowledge and skill, technique is well taught and on other occasions the use of a local artist to work in the classroom is improving the learning of all pupils. As a result, pupils throughout the school enjoy art activities. They behave very well and co-operate in sharing ideas and materials. They show a very good level of initiative and independence, having been encouraged from a very early age to use their own ideas and creativity in their work. Pupils work with care and application in art lessons. They interact well, valuing one another's achievements and taking pride in their accomplishments. They confidently express ideas and feelings and evaluate and modify their own work, often in conjunction with others. They work collaboratively in groups, for example on collage work, or independently on fine drawing. They are highly motivated by the very wide range of experiences that the school offers.
- 110 Strengths in teaching include tasks that are well-matched to pupils' ability and clear instructions with good use of technical language. Teachers have high expectations and excellent relationships with pupils. Teachers inspire the pupils with their own enthusiasm and appreciation of art and offer very good encouragement to all. Pupils study tone, texture, pattern and colour as well as line, shape and form. Respect and value are given to art from a wide variety of cultures. Teachers value pupils' efforts and this is exemplified in the highly attractive displays in classrooms and corridors of pupils' work and artistic design.
- 111 The school is currently using a commercial scheme for art, which is effective because teachers have strong subject knowledge themselves. The school intends to adopt the new national scheme when it is published, along with the new curriculum for the year 2000.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 112 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in design and technology matches the level expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 1 and build upon their knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is above that expected for their age, because pupils make good progress and consistently build upon prior skills. They further develop expertise in using tools and equipment and make particularly good progress in their ability to plan, design and evaluate in a systematic way.
- 113 In Year 1, pupils drew pictures of a snowman shape and planned how they would decorate him. They made choices about which materials to use to make the hat, scarf and nose. In a good link with literacy skills, pupils then wrote a story about their snowman. In Year 2, pupils use glue guns, hammers and saws to make musical instruments. They design decorative features for the instruments, labelling which materials or colours they use.

- 114 In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 design sailing boats. Two designs were made, the second design made after an evaluation of the first. Pupils test their boats and then evaluate and refine their models. Links with history are made in Year 4 as pupils build upon previous skills to build Tudor houses. Each wall was built separately using a wooden frame with joints. As pupils then joined the walls together, they learnt the importance of accurate measuring skills and thus made an effective link with their mathematical skills. Pupils were allowed a limited amount of materials, which had to be planned systematically and, therefore, began to learn the economy of using resources carefully. In Year 5, pupils develop and extend their knowledge of the designing and evaluating process in their topic on biscuits. Pupils make choices in their preference for biscuits by looking at, tasting and evaluating a range of sweet and savoury biscuits. Pupils record their preferences on a recording sheet, which will be used later as they begin to make biscuits in food technology. In Year 6, pupils draw plans for an Egyptian death mask and canopic jar to reflect their work on Ancient Egypt. Masks are made which accurately reflect the designs, with a focus on using a variety of materials and placing appropriate emphasis on the quality of the finished product. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their design, making and evaluating skills as they are supported effectively either in the classroom or in small groups.
- 115 Only three lessons were observed during the inspection; in these, teaching was good overall. Teachers' planning was clearly focused on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Tasks were explained clearly and resources used effectively, enabling pupils to develop their skills in using a variety of tools and materials. Pupils' attitudes to their lessons, and their behaviour, are usually very good because they are interested and motivated to take part in activities. Pupils make good progress in their evaluating skills and in their ability to make informed choices and decisions; this is because teachers plan carefully and give appropriate and meaningful opportunities. Health and safety issues are given appropriate emphasis. Relationships in the school are excellent and this makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal and social education. Pupils work very effectively with a partner, or in small groups. They show interest in and respect the views and opinions of others. Teachers set tasks and activities that provide pupils with appropriate challenges and use a good range of methods in their lessons. Expectations of both work and behaviour are high.
- 116 The co-ordinator has recently revised the policy for design and technology to take into account the most recent government guidance materials. The school is well placed to make further progress in the curriculum, particularly in food technology and in the use of mechanical and electrical systems. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic and has a clear vision of how to develop the subject. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Pupils then were found to have limited experience of a wider range of materials but this is no longer the case. Resources for the teaching of design and technology are satisfactory. The design and technology curriculum is broad and balanced and ensures all pupils receive equal opportunities in their planned activities.

GEOGRAPHY

- 117 Only two geography lessons were seen during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of class displays and discussion with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

- 118 By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is typical for their age. They make steady progress in the development of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. This is in line with standards seen in the previous inspection and is to be expected because of the number of recent innovations implemented by the school. There are, however, increasingly good features to be seen. Pupils' understanding of issues in distant places is now being developed. Due regard is given to the development of basic skills and knowledge about the location of places and geographical features in the United Kingdom. Pupils visit places of interest and study their locality. These features are beginning to make an increasingly positive impact on attainment. However, work is not always matched to pupils' levels of prior attainment. Sometimes expectations for lower attainers are unrealistic and occasionally higher attainers are not sufficiently stretched.
- 119 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of environmental issues. They raise concerns with the local borough council and discuss means of improving the locality with a councillor. They debate arguments for and against an imaginary sale of the school field for housing development. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of geographical features such as glaciers and associated climatic conditions and their recording skills are satisfactory.
- 120 Medium-term planning enables pupils to progress steadily through the year groups. In Year 1, for instance, pupils observe and record weather conditions using symbols. They use a computer to represent their results on a chart. In Year 5, they interpret weather conditions in detail, using symbols and diagrams to record cloud types and wind speed. They interpret weather from maps and write imaginary forecasts. In Year 2, pupils draw landmarks noted on a walk around the locality. They distinguish between house types, describe them and take photographs with a digital camera to display their findings as in an estate agency. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use atlases for research and plot countries on a world map.
- 121 The quality of teaching is mainly good. Most teachers have secure knowledge of the subject, provide interesting and challenging activities and have high expectations of pupils. Consequently, pupils take an interest in their work, are motivated and most make at least steady progress. Sometimes pupils of lower attainment, including those with special educational needs, make slower progress than others when work is not matched to their requirements. The direct involvement of pupils in Year 3 in their own learning leads to them making good progress. Through answers from questionnaires to local firms, pupils were thoroughly motivated and engaged in finding how Baxenden and Accrington are linked to the world via the supply of goods. Insufficient preparation for the use of a video in a Key Stage 2 lesson necessitated a change in planning. The teacher's insecure knowledge of the specialised subject of glaciers was then stretched to the limit and led to a loss of attention. However, pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work during their tasks enabled them to make satisfactory progress. Teachers assess pupils' work effectively through regular marking and opportunities for discussion during lessons.
- 122 Leadership in geography is effective. The geography curriculum is stimulating and meets well the school's aims of developing in pupils an appreciative understanding of the physical world. A useful link has been forged with a primary school in Blackpool in the study of a contrasting locality. The co-ordinator monitors planning and is aware of the need to monitor teaching and learning to make a more positive impact on pupils' attainment. The school has moved forward since the previous inspection and is now well placed to raise standards further.

HISTORY

- 123 Pupils' attainment in history is above that expected nationally by the end of both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and the school has done well in light of the number of recent innovations implemented. Pupils make good progress across the key stages. Few lessons of history were seen during the inspection but discussions with teachers and pupils and scrutiny of plans, work and display provided sufficient evidence to make judgements.
- 124 Pupils in Key Stage 1 study the lives of people in the 20th century and apply literacy skills well in Year 2 when compiling a book about their grandparents' memories of life in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. This first hand research provides an excellent resource for oral history of the locality. The cross-curricular use of artwork adds greatly to the pupils' enjoyment and interest and pupils talk with in-depth knowledge and enthusiasm about the art display they made to illustrate the plague, the fire of London and the writings of Samuel Pepys. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use research skills very effectively to investigate life in Ancient Egypt and to compare many of the features with modern day Egypt. They research the influence of the river Nile on the life of the people in both ancient and modern times and then investigate the clothing, adornments, makeup and lifestyle of people in Ancient Egypt. Pupils in Year 5, discuss with great interest life in Victorian Britain and offer opinions and explanations for illness and poverty, schooling, lifestyles of rich and poor and the employment of children. For example, when researching a photograph of a street doctor, one group of pupils wrote: 'He relied on his quick talking to sell his medicine. We thought that it was very sad that he did not have a shop and that he sold poor quality medicine'. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use compact discs to research evidence and then record their own work using information technology to download photographs and to publish their work. Younger pupils in the key stage are intrigued to research life in Britain under the Romans and then to investigate the invasions of the Saxons. They make aqueducts, oil lamps and houses, complete with mosaic floors, and talk knowledgeably about the use and purpose of all three. They make a Saxon village with houses with thatched roofs and were observed carving their names in Runes on a small block of wood.
- 125 Pupils make good progress in building up factual knowledge and they benefit greatly from the visits that they experience. From an early understanding of the passage of time, through the development of transport, pupils create timelines, which include major events from ancient Egypt through to the present day. Research skills develop effectively in Key Stage 2, and the use of literacy skills across the curriculum is of very high quality and adds greatly to the pupils' attainment in both history and literacy.
- 126 Teaching is very good. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subject and use resources very well to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Lessons are very well-planned and in the best lessons there are opportunities for individual research. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils looked carefully at artefacts from Victorian times and matched them to the equivalent appliance today. Whenever possible, teachers provide pupils with first-hand experiences through visits, which add greatly to their understanding of history. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to their work in history when the teaching is stimulating and based on first hand experience. They are keen to talk about the past and contrast it with the present. For example, pupils in Year 3 were very keen to compare different types of scripts across the centuries in 'English' and relate their own present-day experiences with pencil and paper to their new skill with carving runes into wood. Resources for learning are satisfactory and the school has access through the museum service to a very good supply of high quality artefacts, which are used to the best possible advantage to stimulate pupils' interest. The school has appointed a new co-ordinator and has very recently adopted the new

national scheme for history. Teachers make very good use of resources supplied by the museum loans service to create a good range of opportunities where pupils are encouraged to understand historical ideas and to empathise with characters and attitudes of the past.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 127 Only one lesson in information technology was observed during the inspection. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils and teachers allow judgements to be made. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in information technology matches that expected for their age. The school has made considerable improvements to its curriculum over the past three years. As a result, pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the previous inspection, especially in their ability to handle more modern computers. Information technology is valued as an essential part of the curriculum, although the resources to provide pupils with a greater range of experiences are not yet in place and information technology is not used consistently to support other subjects such as mathematics and science. The school has a very good action plan to provide these resources and to further develop staff expertise with relevant in-service training.
- 128 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and knowledge. They use their keyboard skills to produce short pieces of text on the screen, for example, 'dragon' and 'bonfire' poems. Pupils use the mouse and understand the use of the cursor and of several of the screen icons when amending their work. Pupils in Year 2 identified the programs they use and enthusiastically recalled their use of the digital camera when taking photographs of their houses that they put into the computer and added clear descriptions. They explained the advantages of writing their stories on the screen when describing how they could change the size and shape of their words. They develop their skills in using a range of programs when, for example, listening to stories, or using the floor robot to draw shapes and in art, they create pictures on the screen. Pupils described how to use the mouse and cursor correctly. Several pupils described how to save their work. In discussion, pupils in Year 2 identified ways in which they use technology to make objects, like the floor robot, move and how they found the lines of symmetry in different mathematical shapes. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show knowledge and understanding of the computer as a tool for investigating a range of possibilities and modelling the possible outcomes. For example, in science, they follow a nature trail when visiting a wildlife garden and discover the animals in different places on the screen.
- 129 Pupils in Key Stage 2 build effectively on their skills and knowledge. Several pupils in Year 3 showed their understanding of research skills when identifying on the screen the types of food that different dinosaurs ate. In discussions, pupils explained how they load and save their work. They were confident in using the computer and understood how to bring up the various menus available when, for example, searching for information in an encyclopaedia. In Year 6, pupils use more sophisticated techniques, such as replacing or amending text. Some pupils in Year 6 are very confident and have a good understanding of how to set up and load computers and how to use an adventure game to solve particular problems and gain 'crystals' as they move through the program. They use the computer to support their work in other subjects; in English, for example, they use word processing to produce newspapers, lists and recipes. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their understanding of the control and modelling aspects of information technology, their progress in improving their skills is limited by the resources in school and the lack of programs to allow pupils to sense physical data and display them on the screen.
- 130 When computers were in use during the inspection, the quality of teachers' support for pupils was good. The scrutiny of teachers' planning, the satisfactory progress in the development of skills and work on display show that the overall quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. All teachers plan in detail and those observed were well prepared to

promote pupils' skills in the use of information technology. Pupils respond enthusiastically to opportunities to use computers to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding in information technology. For example, in Year 3 pupils learn how to use the computer as a tool for research into the Saxons and how forces affect structures, such as a bridge, in science. There are excellent relationships between pupils, teachers and adult support staff, which mean that pupils feel confident when using computers to try different activities, knowing their efforts will be appreciated. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the programs used, they give careful and specific explanations to pupils and offer appropriate support to those experiencing difficulty.

- 131 The school has a good policy, scheme of work and detailed action plan to guide its work. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic and well-organised co-ordinator who is keen to move the subject forward. The planned curriculum takes into account all the required aspects of information technology, but the limited time allocated for direct teaching of the subject makes it difficult to cover the curriculum consistently and regularly. The school has the systems in place to connect to the Internet and is waiting for this connection to be made. Very good plans to use the local High School for training for all staff are in place and this liaison is strengthened by the school's use of the High School technician, who is a regular visitor providing expertise and help whenever required. The school is well prepared for future improvements and is making good provision within the limits of its resources. The school is very well placed to make further improvements.

MUSIC

- 132 Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is similar to that of most seven-year-olds but by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attain standards that are higher than most eleven-year-olds. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 but the pace of learning accelerates in Key Stage 2. This matches the findings of the previous inspection and the school has done well to maintain this position in light of the number of recent innovations implemented.
- 133 Pupils in Key Stage 1 copy a simple rhythm, clapping, chanting and singing rhythmically. They use percussion instruments to accompany singing and then experiment in small groups to simulate the sound of horses galloping. They know the names of most percussion instruments and play them correctly. Pupils from an early age listen appreciatively to music from a variety of cultures and traditions in the classroom and assemblies and enjoy the wide range of instruments available in the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 sing in unison both with and without accompaniment, displaying appropriate command of pitch and rhythm. Pupils in Key Stage 2 read a simple score confidently and, when singing, build on their earlier experiences to very good effect as they echo the teacher to develop phrasing and timbre to a high level of competence. They demonstrate very good breath control and mastery of pitch and tempo. They create dramatic effect and atmosphere very effectively in their singing as they recreate songs in the style of the Victorian music hall, demonstrating flamboyance and bravado in their rendition. They sing in two and three part harmony and recognise the use of round and layering within music as they listen to it. They exhibit good posture in their singing and a few higher attaining pupils are beginning to volunteer suggestions for improvement in their work.
- 134 Pupils make very good progress in musical composition and in singing in both key stages, developing their listening skills very well and mastering an increasingly

complex musical vocabulary both in the recognition of instruments and in their use of musical expressions and terminology.

- 135 Pupils in Key Stage 1 compose simple musical rhythms and pupils in Key Stage 2 develop this skill to a high level as they emulate the music of Debussy in their own compositions. They build on the impressionist work of Debussy to create mood and effect with high levels of expression and expertise. All listen with respect to the work of peers and show interest and understanding of their work. Pupils make very good progress in skills of performance, building on their early experiences to play a range of tuned and untuned percussion with good attention to rhythm, dynamics and expression of mood. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from music lessons, learning to play violin and recorders.
- 136 Musical appreciation forms a major part of the curriculum and is used to link with many other subjects. For example, pupils experience Tudor music in history, they link music to impressionist paintings in art. In physical education they use music in movement and dance, for example, very young pupils in Key Stage 1 use reggae to accompany dance rhythms and older pupils in the key stage interpret 'Carnival of the Animals' very effectively as they change their movements to reflect the pace and mood of the music. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 devise a sequence of dance movements in small groups or with a partner to the accompaniment of cello music as they interpret the music through movement.
- 137 Teaching is generally of a very high quality. There is a very brisk pace to the lessons coupled with an invigorating enthusiasm and expert subject knowledge. These ensure the use of methods and strategies that are very well suited to the needs of the pupils and which demand high standards. Lessons are very well-planned and teachers generally have high expectations of the pupils' abilities. There is a very clear teaching of skills and this is developed progressively throughout the school, enabling pupils to build on their prior learning to attain high standards by the time they reach 11 years of age.
- 138 All instruments are easily accessible and good quality displays enhance the pupils' appreciation of music. Recorder groups meet regularly, although the choir is temporarily in abeyance. Pupils sing annually for residents at the local Old People's Home and in the church. On two occasions, they have performed at the Guildhall in Preston. Pupils show great enjoyment of music at both key stages. They collaborate very well in group composition and listen attentively and respectfully to the work of peers. Pupils encounter music from a range of cultures and styles during assemblies and in lessons and enjoy all with equal pleasure. The resources are good, allowing free use of percussion for all pupils in a class. The school is well placed to develop further because of the emphasis to provide a rich musical environment for all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 139 Although it was not possible to observe the full range of work in physical education, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils all indicate that the school delivers an appropriate curriculum.
- 140 The National Curriculum requirement that all pupils swim safely for at least 25 metres was achieved by all pupils in 1999 and has already been achieved by the pupils in Year 6. Pupils make good progress in their swimming owing to good teaching, which takes into account the different abilities of the pupils. In the lesson observed, teaching was good, with pupils making good progress in their backstroke. Pupils work hard, follow instructions and enjoy their swimming lessons.

- 141 In Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in physical education is above the level expected for their age. In Year 1, pupils are competent when setting out apparatus and develop their expertise in using controlled movements on the apparatus. In games, soft balls are used to practise throwing and catching skills. In Year 2, pupils warm-up their bodies to music in an enthusiastic way. They explore feelings and mood in dance whilst moving to 'The Carnival of the Animals'. Pupils respond quickly to changes in musical tempo, from a light, delicate sequence of movements, to heavy, stepping movements. They evaluate their own performance and the performance of others. Pupils understand safety rules and follow them effectively in their activities.
- 142 Pupils in Key Stage 2 build effectively upon previous skills and by the end of the key stage, attainment is above the level expected for their age. Warm-up skills and activities are well established and pupils in Year 3 begin their lesson with an enthusiastic dance routine to pop music, which they all thoroughly enjoy. Pupils in Year 4 practise controlled movements while changing speed and direction. In Year 5, pupils build upon these skills and develop their partner and group work. Using a 'movement map', they work very effectively in groups to practise, perform and evaluate their movements. Pupils in Year 6 explore the cultural and ethnic aspects of dance when learning Irish dancing. Extra-curricular activities in netball, football and line dancing enrich the curriculum and make a good contribution to pupils' personal and social education. Moral education is enhanced as pupils develop the understanding of specific rules relating to team games and the concept of fair play in competitive game situations.
- 143 The quality of teaching of physical education is at least satisfactory and often good and this has a clear impact on the progress pupils make in their good learning of skills. Relationships between teachers, support assistants and pupils are very positive and this enables pupils to develop their confidence and try new activities with enthusiasm. Teachers display sound subject knowledge, use resources effectively and plan their lessons to contain activities for the ability levels of all pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported, not just by the class teachers, but also by other pupils, who offer their help in a supportive and friendly way. In the majority of lessons, teachers control their pupils effectively and this ensures that behaviour is good. In less effective lessons, the control of pupils is less well established, allowing them to be inattentive and make less progress. In the majority of lessons, teachers are good role models for pupils, making sure that they are changed for lessons and wearing safe footwear. Literacy links are promoted when pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to instructions and music and talk to their partners when practising skills. Numeracy skills are developed particularly through the skilful use of resources; for example, beanbags with numbers on are used in small games activities.
- 144 The subject co-ordinator has recently up-dated the school policy, which is presently in draft form. Colleagues are supported effectively in their lesson planning, in class support and sharing expertise after attending courses. Accommodation and resources for the curriculum are satisfactory. Standards in physical education have improved since the last inspection and the school is well placed to maintain and further improve the curriculum.